

A

4323. b

FARTHER DEFENCE
of

TWO DISCOURSES

relating to

Positive Institutions:

in answer to

the Rev. Mr. *CALEB FLEMING*'s

VINDICATION of the APPENDIX
to the *PLEA* for *INFANTS*.

By *JOSEPH BURROUGHS*.

L O N D O N:

Printed and Sold by JOHN NOON, at the *White-Hart*,
near *Mercer's Chapel*, in *Cheapside*; and AARON WARD,
in *Little Britain*. MDCCXLVI. 1 s. 6 d.

4323. h. 15.

A

4323. b

FARTHER DEFENCE
of

TWO DISCOURSES

relating to

Positive Institutions:

in answer to

the Rev. Mr. *CALEB FLEMING*'s

VINDICATION of the APPENDIX

to the *PLEA* for *INFANTS*.

By JOSEPH BURROUGHS.

L O N D O N:

Printed and Sold by JOHN NOON, at the *White-Hart*,
near *Mercer's Chapel*, in *Cheapside*; and AARON WARD,
in *Little Britain*. MDCCXLVI. 1564.



ARTHER DEFENCE

of

TWO DISCOVERIES

Positive identifications:

in answer to

the Rev. Mr. Carter's

Vindication of the Appendix

to the Park for

By JOSEPH BURROUGHS

L O N D O N :

Printed and Sold by John Noon, at the White-Hart,
near Mevet's Chapel, in Chancery; and Aaron Ward,
in Lamb Palace, MIDDLESEX.

Preface.

A Great part of these papers has lain by me above a twelve month untouched, chiefly for want of that health and strength which were necessary for the tedious work of transcribing. The treatise, to which they are designed as an Answer, bears two titles: the one, very general, A Defence of Infant Baptism: the other, more particular, A Vindication of the Appendix to the Plea for Infants. In the following sheets I have, to avoid the confusion and the tediousness of referring to long titles of books often to be cited, quoted my opponent's treatise under it's latter particular title: and so much the rather, because my last, occasioned by his attack on my Two Discourses, is intituled A Defence. I have followed him in the Sections, into which he has thought fit to divide his work. Nor could the Introduction be neglected: wherein my opponent has endeavoured to vindicate his own ill treatment of his brethren, abundantly justified the complaints I had brought against him, and given occasion for more.

In Answer to Section I; after a brief account of the nature and design of christian baptism in particular, I consider the obligation of obeying divine institutions in general: and shew, that I did not in my Two Discourses carry their importance too high; since it is really a point of morality, and in the judgement of our blessed Lord a fulfilling of righteousness, to obey the authority of the divine being when made known to us: that I did not make meer will and pleasure, but the known command of the infinitely wise and righteous and gracious governor, considered as the infinitely wise, righteous and gracious governor, the sufficient foundation of obedience: and that I did not call in question either the capacity or the integrity of infant-baptizers, by shewing the reasons why I could not agree with them in the practice of infant baptism. I observe that it is bad arguing from a former dispensation, the great end of which is already accomplished, to what we imagine ought to succeed it under the gospel.

Mr. Fleming argues, with respect to baptism, as if Christ had nothing to do in the institution of it. We think the divine authority of Christ the lawgiver the proper foundation for what should be affirmed concerning the baptism, which by authority from heaven he himself instituted. And the ascribing to Christ his own ordinance of baptism quite overturns Mr. Fleming's hypothesis. His doctrine of the Seals is here considered, and refuted. Circumcision never was a Seal to any other person in the world, than Abraham only: and to him it was a seal of the righteousness of his own faith, which it could not be to infants. Distinction is made by the apostle, ROM. IV. II. between circumcision as a sign or token, which it was to all Abraham's seed; and circumcision as a seal of the faith which Abraham had before he was circumcised, which was therefore peculiar to himself. Scripture never once calls baptism the seal of the gospel covenant, any more than it calls circumcision the seal of that which was made with Abraham. Dangerous, to build upon unscriptural expressions, and upon allusions of our own making, schemes of unwarranted relation to former dispensations, or rules for our practice under the gospel. True meaning of the word Seal, as applied in Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament. Mr. Fleming himself not able to tell what covenant it was, which he supposes circumcision sealed to infants. The Abrahamic covenant very different from the gospel; and this at length owned by Mr. Fl. after he had affirmed that they were the same. His doctrine of the households refuted. His own texts directly against him. The Scripture is as clear in affirming, that the households heard and believed the word, as that the households were baptized: and the general passages ought to be explained by those which are more particular. However it is no where affirmed, that any household was baptized on the faith of its head: nor do the texts which mention households give just ground for any such inference. Refutation of the renewed charge, of calling in question the capacity or integrity of the pædobaptists. The charge of bigotry and uncharitableness falls back upon the accuser. The renouncing of religions before professed will not help Mr. Fl. with regard to John's baptism: much less with regard to the baptism instituted by Jesus Christ. His wild and inconsistent scheme, tending to prove, that the baptism of the infants

of

P R E F A C E.

v

of professed christians is their security against annihilation. Express prohibition not necessary, to warrant us in denying baptism to infants; since such an account is given concerning it, both by Christ himself and his inspired followers, as amounts to a prohibition. Large account of Christ's commission, to this purpose; and of the reasonings of his followers in the primitive age. The true reason why Christ did not order infants to be baptized, was because he did not see it fit, but unfit to be done. Mr. F's argument from deduction, answered paragraph by paragraph. Antidote against it, from the plain sense of MAT. XXVIII. 19. MAT. XVI. 16. ACTS XXII. 16. 1 PET. III. 21. GAL. III. 26, 27. and ROM. VI. 3, 4. Baptism not meerly and only a rite of separation; but the token of a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ. No such analogy between baptism and circumcision, as can give ground to believe, that Christ our lawgiver would have the practice of the Jews relating to circumcision to be a rule to christians in relation to baptism: and yet without this the argument proves nothing: and if we stick close to it, it proves more than our brethren the pædobaptists would wish. This analogy, or rather, the vast difference, between the two ordinances, largely considered. Consent, in the subject of baptism, is according to Scripture-account of the ordinance, necessary to the fulfilling of righteousness therein. Righteousness is not fulfilled by the infant-subject of baptism, for want of that consent, which the infant is incapable of giving: nor is it fulfilled by those who administer baptism to infants; because they have no authority from Scripture to do it.

In answer to the II^d Section I have shewn: that my account of the design of Christ's journey from Galilee to Jordan is exactly scriptural; Mr. Fleming's only imaginary.

In the III^d Section, which is upon profelyte baptism, I have shewn: that profelytes were not, by virtue of the Mosaic constitution, obliged to have the water of separation applied to them; the command relating to that water of separation being confined to such as were already members of the Jewish polity; particularly to the priests and Levites, and such as were under a ceremonial uncleanness. If there had been a command to the Jews, to baptize profelytes and their children; yet that could not be a rule of conduct in the christian church, unless Christ had declared he would have it so. Proof, from the Talmud and Maimonides,

Maimonides, *that proselyte-baptism was performed by immersion: which quite overthrows Mr. Fleming's scheme, of its being performed by sprinkling of the water of separation. Digression against Maimonides, concerning the origine of the practice. No obligation upon christians, to practise, in respect of baptism, as the Jews are supposed to have done. Mr. Fleming's fallacious way of arguing, concerning the use of baptismal water, as of divine appointment among the Jews. There were divers washings by divine appointment among the Jews: but proselyte-baptism was not of that number: and the baptism, which Jesus himself ordained to be used in his church, was intirely his own, and delivered as his own, by immediate authority from God; to which authority he appealed in the commission, Mat. xxviii. 19. Reconsideration of the text, Joh. i. 25. Why baptizest thou, &c. Very probable, from a fact recorded in the book of Judith, that proselyte-baptism was not in use, when that book was written. The silence of the primitive christian writers about it is a strong probability, that the practice was unknown in our Saviour's time. Sum of the Argument relating to proselyte-baptism. Dilemma. If there was any such baptism, was it administred to proselytes before their circumcision, or after?*

Sect. IV. *My conclusion just, from the principles on which my second Discourse was built. Evaded by Mr. Fleming, though it is the main point on which the controversy turns. From those principles it does appear to be the mind of Christ, that none but adult persons should be baptized. Our Lord's baptism not at all in favour of the baptism of infants; but directly against it, because of the purity and innocency in both cases. Infants are equally the care of heaven now, as under former dispensations: nor are they losers by the gospel dispensation, though there is no precept for taking them into the church, till they themselves come to desire it. They have indeed greater advantages by being brought up in the knowledge of the christian religion, than the Jewish children could enjoy by their circumcision. The argument from teaching conclusive: because idiots, mad men, infidels and atheists, do as much belong to the all nations that are to be baptized, as infants. Circumcision, though a token of the covenant made with Abraham, yet not a seal to his seed, but only to himself: as before largely proved, in answer to the first Section. Vast difference therefore, between its being a seal*

a seal and a token: *If circumcision was the seal of interest in the covenant; then the females, not being circumcised, were left out of the covenant. And if it was to the female Jews a token of the covenant made with their nation; yet that will never prove that infants ought to be baptized under the dispensation of the gospel. Philip very much injured by the writer of the Appendix and its Vindication: for Philip could have no other meaning, than to require a profession of believing with all the heart, to give a right to baptism; leaving the sincerity or insincerity of that profession to the judgment of God.*

Sect. V. *Upon the question, What is baptism? The word βαπτίζω, in 1 Cor. x. 2. [baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea] though figuratively used, yet refers to such circumstances, as justify the allusion to immersion in water, on profession of faith, which is the true christian baptism: but will by no means justify the allusion to the sprinkling of infants, who can make no profession. The main view of the apostle in this passage is overlooked by Mr. Fleming. It is indeed subversive of his cause; as the reigning thought in the apostle's mind, both in that text itself and in the context, was the similitude, between the Israelites, in that allusive baptism, acknowledging Moses as their guide to the earthly Canaan, and christians, in their real baptism, acknowledging Christ for their guide to the heavenly. The sense of the preposition εἰς, in Mar. i. 9. reconsidered, and shewn to be emphatical. No correspondency between the water of separation and John's baptism, notwithstanding that John was of the race of the priests. Plain proofs, that εἰς, in Mar. i. and Mat. iii. signifies into. The criticisms on ἀπο and ἐκ, answered in the observations on εἰς. The historical circumstances relating to the baptisms in the New Testament concur with the plain words of the texts themselves, to shew what was the action of baptizing. The distinction between βαπτίζω and βαπτίζω will not help the cause of infant-sprinkling: because we are to be guided in our practice by the use of the word βαπτίζω in the New Testament, the sense of which may easily be determined by the circumstances attending. No room for an alarm in the converted Jews, at being separated from their children in baptism: because they knew they were called to the profession of christianity each for himself; and not their whole body*

dy collected together, to covenant for themselves and their children.

I had no design or desire of entering into thus much controversy, when I published my Two Discourses. They were intended to defend, against the enemies of christianity and of all revealed religion, the honour due to divine institutions in general, and particularly those delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ; and to shew, that Christ designed baptism to be of perpetual use in his church, and to be submitted to by all who believe the divine authority of his doctrine. Whatever they contain different from the sentiments and practice of my brethren the pædobaptists, was managed with the express view and desire of avoiding to give them offence; though it could not be left out, because of its relation to the argument. I heartily wish, that truth may prevail, and the honour of Jesus be advanced; that christians may take care, not to set up one part of their duty in opposition to another; and that notwithstanding differences of sentiment, they may follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

July 4. 1746.

1 AU 59

J. B.



A FAR-

A

FARTHER DEFENCE

OF

TWO DISCOURSES, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

THE anonymous author of *the Appendix to the Plea for Infants*, after endeavouring to conceal himself in many writings, fill'd with bitter reflections against a whole body of his christian brethren, has at length thought fit to publish his name; and together with it the * reasons why he laboured so long to keep it a secret. But after all the reasons he assigns, I can give no better account of his concealment, considering the treatment he has given to his brethren; and to me in particular, than by comparing him to a man, who hides himself behind a hedge, and shoots at one that stands in an open field, whom, right or wrong, he is resolved to treat as an enemy. I do not find, that the prefixing his name to his *Vindication* has made any change in him for the better. He represents himself indeed as a most excellent person: and takes it very ill, that any such things should be laid to his charge, as he † says I have alledged against him. In answer to which I only desire, that the reader would turn to my *Defence*, and see with his own eyes *the proofs*; the plain proofs, I have produced for whatever I have said, in those very passages to which he refers, and of which he complains.

He is particularly displeased with my ascribing to him a *sovereign contempt of the whole body of adult baptizers*: and affirms, that this is a very *injurious* representation of him;

B

as,

* *Vindication*, p. vii, viii.

† p. viii.

2 *A farther Defence of two Discourses,*

as, 'being * conscious, that he never *intended* to throw the least contempt on *the body of them*; no, nor upon any one individual of that body, on account of his differing sentiments.' Indeed he acknowledges † shortly after, 'that he has expressed *contempt* towards the *bigotry of the party*'; and after citing in part what I had quoted from him as a *scornful invective against the whole body*, he coins a distinction, pag. x. of his Introduction, and asks: 'Do I direct a *sovereign contempt*, in *this* passage, at the *number*, or at the *bigotry of the party*?' To which I answer: that, *in this very passage*, compared with his present reference and appeal to it, he casts contempt upon *the whole number*, small or great, distinguishing them by the odious name of *bigots*. I call his citation *partial*: because, he has therein taken care to leave out some of the principal expressions, which prove *his sovereign contempt of that whole body*, concerning which he speaks with so much scorn, by reason of *the smallness of their numbers*. Indeed he has, in quoting his own words, owned so much, as contains the charge of *unballowed, uncharitable zeal in every individual, in proportion to the attachment he has for adult baptism*. But he has left out the closing words of the paragraph: wherein he had affirmed, that *scarce any exception will lie against this observation*: and whether this is, or is not, charging *the whole body*, I will leave the reader to judge.

Another thing *the Vindicator* seems to take very ill of me; that *I affirm he has taken occasion to fall foul on my character*: and he represents it as a great crime in me, that I have thus charged him. In answer to this, I desire the reader to be so just, as to turn to my *Defence*, pag. 9.—14. and to see whether I have not proved, that this *innocent* gentleman had in his *Appendix* made a *false and injurious* quotation of my words; and had, upon the sole strength of his own *false quotation* represented me, as *intending to express a false way of reasoning,—calculated to mislead, not to inform the mind,—to throw a false light before the eye of the reader, by leading him to imagine, that the absolute necessity of moral rectitude and the manifest inferiority and subserviency of positive commands is but a plausible and deceptious view of them*. If this author has made a *false quotation* of my words, and has argued up-
on

* *Vindication*, p. viii.

† p. ix.

on that false quotation, to the casting these *odious imputations* upon me, when in the book he was writing against I had expressly *guarded against* any such imputations, and all along considered ritual institutions as inferior and subservient to moral obligations: then he has *fallen foul on my character*, in an *injurious* way.

But it seems, the very mention of this, even in my own *defence*, is a crime in me. The man, who actually *has fallen foul on my character* (in the numerous reflexions just now quoted from him) wipes his mouth, as if he had done *no harm*. And, not content with this, he reproaches me for charging him with what, in the necessary defence of my own character, I have plainly proved against him. Nay, he goes so far as to say, pag. ix. that *I have shewn him the way of falling foul on character*; which he, good man, will be far from imitating. I forbear making any reflexions on this extraordinary conduct: and could mention many other instances, wherein the same meek gentleman has *fallen foul on my character*; but omit them merely for the sake of shortening personal debates.

But I cannot help observing: that after he has taken pains to shew *he never intended to throw the least contempt on the body of the Anabaptists*; yet he immediately affirms, pag. x. that '*the party* is chargeable with *bigotry*, in the point of '*baptism*.' By which *party*, it is plain, he means *the whole body*: for the proof he brings of his charge of *bigotry* against *the party* is, that '*they look on their mode of baptism*, applied only to *adult subjects*, as necessary to determine any to be of *the visible church of Christ*; which, he '*sais*, is the manifest design of my *two Discourses*, and of '*the Defence*.' Upon which he makes a quotation as from me: and after the quotation makes these two inferences for me: — *So that all other baptism is invalid; and none are properly christians, but the adult baptized.*

I cannot forbear standing still here for a moment, to express my abhorrence of what in this last inference my antagonist has the assurance to ascribe to me; when he knows, that though I do not believe the ceremony usually applied to infants to be baptism, and look on my pædobaptist brethren as under a mistake in that particular; yet throughout my *two Discourses* and *the Defence* of them I acknow-

4 *A farther Defence of two Discourses,*

ledge them as *my brethren, my christian brethren, whom I love and honour*. If he has a mind to quibble upon the word *properly*, I have not: for I do not believe, that the ceremony of baptism is that which *properly* makes us christians. It is faith in Jesus Christ, such a faith as produces conformity to his holy doctrine, in heart and life, that *properly makes us christians*. And this declaration, I think, is very consistent with saying, in the * passage to which Mr. *Fleming* refers; 'that the profession of the christian religion ought to be made in that very way, which Christ himself thought fit to appoint:' and very consistent likewise with saying † elsewhere; that, 'I cannot acknowledge infants to be *visible members of Christ's church*.'

Mr. *Fleming* therefore may, if he will, *contemn and ridicule* us; nay, and charge the whole party with *bigotry*, as he does, over and over, both in this xth, and likewise in the xith page, for communicating only with those of our own way. But let him cool a little, and then declare: whether with all his *contempt of bigotry*, he himself receives to the Lord's table those whom he verily believes to be *unbaptized*: or whether he knows of any denomination of christians that does this. If those whom he calls *Anabaptists* do not receive to the Lord's table those whom they verily believe to be unbaptized, they do the very same thing, which Mr. *Fleming* and his brethren, and ‡ all other denominations of christians do, and much upon the same principles: that is to say, they have such thoughts about the connexion between baptism and the Lord's supper, and about the constitution of a christian church; that they think it *irregular* to administer this latter

* *Defence*, pag. 60. † *Def.* pag. 49. ‡ If all those are *bigots*, who receive none to the Lord's table but such as they believe to be baptized; almost the whole body of *infant-baptizers*, as well as the *Antipædobaptists*, must be accounted of that character. And no doubt, they will cop Mr. *Fleming* their thanks for it; who had rather prove all his brethren *bigots*, than fail of passing a censure upon us. But he would do well to ask himself and his brethren, why they do not receive infants to the Lord's supper as well as to baptism. For the New Testament is so plain, in shewing that they who have a right to the one of these ordinances have a right to the other; that when *infant-baptism* crept into the church, *infant communion* came quickly after it as a natural consequence; and continued in the western churches, till they received the doctrine of transubstantiation; and remains among the *Greek churches* to this day.

latter ordinance to such, as have not by the former made a *regular entrance* into the church itself. My antagonist knows, that this is the very state of the case: and therefore, if he were that moderate, that charitable, that catholic christian, which he pretends to be, he would treat his brethren as mistaken brethren; and not load them with the odious characters of *uncharitableness* and *bigotry*, and upon every turn call them by a name of reproach, which the true state of their case shews they do not deserve. The *Anabaptists*, as he calls them, do not lay their stress upon *the way* or *mode of baptizing*, but upon *baptism* itself; not upon being *thus* or *thus* baptized, but upon being *baptized* at all: and this because they verily believe, that *sprinkling* is not *baptizing*, and therefore not the thing which Christ the lawgiver appointed to be done; and further, because they verily believe, that infants are not the persons whom Christ commanded to be baptized; but, according to the account which he and his apostles have given of this ordinance, utterly incapable of it. If they are herein mistaken, let their ignorance be pitied, and let them be set to rights in a spirit of meekness: but the calling them *Anabaptists*, and *uncharitable bigots*, for doing the same things, and upon the same principles, as almost all other christians do, is not the way to convince them that they are in the * wrong.

And the author with whom I have to do is the more in-
excu-

* I think it no more than justice to those, with whom I suffer Mr. *Fleming's* reproaches, to observe here: that though it is upwards of forty years since I myself was baptized on profession of faith (and it may well be supposed, that in all that time I have had numerous opportunities of hearing what the people of this way have said concerning their brethren of other denominations) yet I have never once heard any one of them disown the pædobaptists from being their fellow christians. Nor indeed, do I believe, that Mr. *Fleming* himself ever did; though he is so ready by inferences and inuendoes to make his readers believe, that they are so *uncharitable*. Nay in that very page of his Introduction (page x.) where he makes such loud outcries against us for keeping up distinct societies, he acknowledges, that *we own pædobaptists to be heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*; and that *we admit pædobaptist ministers to offer up our prayers and praises to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. From all which one would think it should appear, that we do not *unchristian* our brethren; and that our view is, to prevent an ordinance of Jesus Christ from being lost; besides, that the greatest part of us think, with our pædobaptist brethren, that baptism is essential to the constitution of a christian church.

6 *A farther Defence of two Discourses,*

excusable, for thus reproaching those in particular, who are at least as *catholic* as he himself, even in his own sense of catholicism; who have in their minds latitude enough to receive to the Lord's table persons whom they believe to be yet unbaptized; and yet, to prevent mischievous breaches among others who have not so large a latitude, endeavour to persuade those unbaptized persons to go to other societies, where they will be looked upon as baptized. When such endeavours are used, in such circumstances, especially in populous places, where there is large room for choice, and at the same time respect and affection are shewn to brethren of different sentiments, as fellow christians: I appeal to all impartial judges, whether there is occasion given for the terrible outcries of my angry opposer; especially when to those who use these measures there appears no other probable way, for preserving what they believe to be Christ's ordinance of baptism from being utterly lost; as it is certain it has been in almost all those churches that ever admitted mixt communion; and scarce an instance is to be found, wherein *one generation* has not seen, in such churches, an end of all those, who chose to be baptized by immersion, upon profession of faith.

Let now *the Vindicator* go on with his triumph. Let him trumpet forth the praises of *his own catholicism*; and run down the *bigotry* of *the party*, the *whole party*, of those he is writing against. Let him affirm, as he does, page xii. that 'the charge he has brought against *the Anabaptists* has too much occasion given for it, even with regard to that *unseemly degree of warmth*, expressed by them, when debating the point of baptism.' And let him, as he most learnedly does in the very next words, affirm, as a proof of his charge against these *Anabaptists* in general; that *he himself has, once in his life*, [once in his life] *been an eye and an ear-witness, among many others, of* [pray mind it] *something like a feverish heat, in the spirit of a very public performance, though delivered by a gentleman* [one gentleman] *of a very public character.* Let him affirm, as he does presently afterwards; that 'he has been informed, that some others, [perhaps these might be only *some few*] of the most shining characters among the *Anabaptists*, have not been able to preserve their moderation, when debating on the subject

of

‘ of baptism.’ Yet all this, and a hundred times more of the like kind added to it, would fall vastly short of vindicating *the Vindicator*, in that contemptuous usage of *a whole body* of his brethren; which he denies he ever intended to throw upon *the body of them*, but which, if we may safely judge from his own plain words, any one will believe he *did intend*.

What he * quotes from Dr. Gale, let it be right or wrong, I am not obliged to answer for; and therefore not at all concerned in the reflexions made upon him. But, it is fit to observe the excessive folly, and the great injustice of arguing upon it, as Mr. Fleming does, pag. xv. repeating Dr. Gale’s words, and his alone, as a proof of what he advances. ‘ This came from the pen of *one*, [I desire the reader to mark it; *this came from the pen of One*] of the first character among the *Antipædobaptists*, both for temper and learning. So that *the stigma of bigotry* is but too justly fixed on *the party*.’ Reader observe: This is the true *Flemingian* Logic, whereby *the whole party* of *Antipædobaptists* are proved to be *bigots*. And if they will not take this for *full proof* against them; or if they will still persist in believing, that Mr. Fleming ever intended to cast contempt upon *their whole party*; let all the world look upon them as a parcel of incorrigible, obstinate wretches.

But the logician himself seems not to think his point fully proved against *the whole party*, till he has particularly brought in me for a share of the blame of † *feverishness*, ‘ if not of *bigotry* too, in its *full strength*.’ Indeed he seems to speak here with some diffidence. But to all that he says concerning me, I answer: that if in my *Defence* I did express some indignation at *the contempt* thrown by him upon *all my brethren*; I still think there was a just reason for it. And as for my expression of *poor despised Anabaptists*: that is sufficiently justified by the circumstance of my writing in their defence against one who had so plentifully poured *contempt* upon them; and likewise by the contempt, with which the very name of *Anabaptist* is usually treated. As to his present charge against them, of *fanaticism*, and *the pretended manifest peril to some constitutions upon plunging in cold water*: the sneering manner in which these things are introduced shews that

8 *A farther Defence of two Discourses,*

that the author is not in a fit disposition to receive an answer.

If Mr. *F.* is angry at my intimating that ‘his * works shew him to be inclin’d to strife and contention;’ let him do me the justice to acknowledge, that I mentioned this only by way of comparison; saying, in the page which he quotes from me, which is the 7th page of my *Defence*, that ‘I am satisfied’ [and so I am still] that ‘there are thousands among the *Antipædobaptists* much less inclined to strife and contention, than his works shew him to be.’ This was said in answer to his *false charge* against them: wherein, as I observed, he had in general, ‘with scarce an exception to be allowed, condemned them as guilty of *an unhalloved, uncharitable zeal for their peculiarity.*’ The works of his to which I there referred, were these that follow: *plunging, a subject of bigotry when made essential to baptism: the Plea for infants: the Appendix to that Plea: and the farther Defence of Infant baptism, addressed to adult baptizers in general, more particularly to those of the County of Kent.* If he has written works of a different kind, wherein *he has attempted some defences of the Christian Revelation*, as he † intimates he has: I have not, to my knowledge, read a page of them; and therefore cannot tell, whether the encomiums bestowed on him by his friends are just or not. In that part of my *Defence*, to which on this occasion he refers, I took for granted, that as a christian minister he had *attempted to defend the christian revelation* some way or other, and particularly in his preaching: and I there called upon him, as I still do here, to declare ‘upon what foot he has placed the doctrines of christianity, strictly and properly speaking; and why the Son of God was sent into this lower world to make them known, if we must regard nothing but *what arises from reason abstractly taken, or the manifest nature and truth of things*; which is the direct tendency of his arguing, in the passage there refer’d to.

* *Vindication*, p. xix. † *Ibid.*

Answer to Section I.

THE *Vindicator* begins upon hypotheses of his own; taking them for granted as principles, and arguing upon them, as if nothing had ever been said on the other side; at least as if no notice was to be taken of my *Defence* against those assaults of his, which are the very occasion of his present *Vindication*. He tells us: that 'he has all along represented *water baptism* as a *Jewish rite*, which Jesus adopted, and has appointed the use of, in order to initiate into his church or kingdom, or to *distinguish* men and their families from those who embrace not the christian doctrine: and that at the first preaching of the gospel, men who embraced it were immediately initiated, with their households, by baptism.' In return I tell him: that I have always considered the baptism which Christ ordained to be practised in his church, as a rite *intirely christian*, and not *Jewish*: that among the *Jews*, not baptism, but circumcision, was the initiating rite: that the baptism instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, (the only baptism that is the proper subject of our controversy) was by the institutor himself designed to be the token of a personal profession of believing his doctrine, and of resolving to be guided by it; that it includes a view to repentance and turning from sin, and exhibits the hope of pardon to all those who in the sincerity of their hearts comply with it: that I humbly hope I have shewn, it was not the mind of Christ that any other should be baptized, than those who make the abovementioned profession: and that so far ^{as} appears by the accounts given in the New Testament, no person in any family or household was baptized in the apostolic age, other than those who made personal profession of their own faith.

And if this author will stand to what he says * presently after; 'that the *importance* of any *rite* is to be estimated from its *use* and *intention*,' and will abide by what the New Testament itself declares to be *the use and intention of baptism*; he must, I think, allow the views which I ascribe to that ordinance. For the apostle *Paul* appeals to the *Romans*, ch. vi. ver. 4. that *therefore*, [to this very end, with this

C

10 *A farther Defence of two Discourses,*

this very view] *we are buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* My opposer therefore may talk as much as he pleases about *aptitude, influence, and tendency* to promote moral rectitude, and may speak as diminutively as he will concerning *baptism*, because it has not in its own nature a necessary influence in religion: and yet, if it appears that the author of our religion did by authority from heaven institute a ceremony, in the use of which he would have his disciples voluntarily profess their subjection to him; and if that ceremony, in the relation it bears to the institutor, has *an aptitude* to put them in mind of their obligations to promote *moral rectitude* and to avoid immoralities of every kind; and if besides what may be gathered from the commission to baptize, we are assured by an inspired apostle, that these things were designed to be set forth by that ceremony in the very act of administration: then, though baptism has not in itself any virtue or influence *to purify or save*, yet it is of considerable *importance* to us; and that *importance* is much better accounted for in the view in which I have placed it, than in that of my opposer. His way of accounting for *christian baptism* loses those views of it, which are by far *the most important*, and which, from the very institution itself and from many descriptions of it, plainly appear to have been the grand *design* and *intention* for which it was appointed. I have just now mentioned one very strong declaration of its *end* and *design*. And this answers perfectly well to the institution itself: which commands Christ's ministers *to baptize disciples into the name of the Father, Son and holy Ghost*; that is, into the profession of that doctrine, which is the mind of God the Father, published to mankind by the Son, and confirmed by the mighty power of the holy Ghost: and this contains the same important views which are represented by the apostle in his description.

There is therefore in Christ's ordinance of baptism *an aptitude* and *tendency* to promote moral rectitude: and consequently, to represent (as Mr. *Fleming* does) the *end* and *design* of baptism as * *only a rite of separation*; and to apply at the same time this rite to subjects incapable of answering the

important

* *Vindiq.* p. 22. lin. 8—11.

important ends which the New Testament manifestly ascribes to it; is to contradict the doctrine of the New Testament. And to make this hypothesis the foundation of the controversy, upon which to build *a vindication* of what had been already thrown down; is *only* to beg the question.

The 23d and 24th pages of *the Vindication* are taken up in endeavouring to wipe off the * charge I had brought against the author, for quoting my words *falsely*, and arguing *injuriously* against me under the influence of that *false quotation*. Upon a careful review of my own charge, I still persist in it, though I would be glad to acquit him of it, if I could consistently with truth. To avoid lengthening *the* controversy, I again desire the reader to compare my *Defence*, page 9.—14. with the occasion which this author had given for it in his *Appendix*, page 3, 4, 7: and then see whether his present *Vindication* does at all clear him. In my opinion it only fastens it more firmly upon him. Every one who understands grammar may easily see what I affirm; and how *opposite* it is to what he ascribes to me. Nor will his subterfuge about *the example* at all help him: since he has placed *the example* mentioned by me in quite a different view from what I had placed it in; and substituted it, by his *injuriously* manner of quotation, in the room of *the thing itself*, which every one may see my sentence affirmed; and then argued upon it, to persuade his readers what ill views I had in my mind. I appeal to them: and only desire a fair comparison.

I am glad that *the Vindicator* will allow 'the authority' of Jesus with respect to positive institutions to be unquestionably binding, so far as men can discern the intention 'or design of them:' but am sorry he cannot go a little farther, and acknowledge, that upon the clear testimonials of a divine mission with which Jesus was attended, it would have become us to obey his institutions, even though he had not let us into the ends and designs of them as he has done. But he seems to be of the mind, that if our Lord had not let us into the *intention* and *design* of his ordinances, we should have been under no obligation to submit to them: and after quoting some passages from me, wherein 'I differ from

C 2

'him,

* See the substance of this charge, in pag. 2. of this present Defence.

12 *A farther Defence of two Discourses,*

‘him, adds, pag. 26. that he is not sure, that mankind
‘has ever been obliged by any positive institution from *the*
‘*mere will* of the lawgiver: for they all seem to have had
‘respect to such a disposition of things, from which their re-
‘lation and obligation has arisen; and therefore *the meer will*
‘of the lawgiver has not been *the sole reason* for the subject’s
‘obedience.’

I am sorry to see so much pains taken to fasten upon me an odium which I have not deserved. When I say, (in pag. 19. of my *Two Discourses*) that in positive institutions the mere will of the lawgiver, *considering who the lawgiver is*, is a sufficient reason for the subject’s obedience; I am far from affirming, that *meer will* is *the sole reason*. In speaking of *the will of the lawgiver*, it is easily seen that I here mean, *the declaration of that will, to persons rightfully subject to the lawgiver, and acquainted with his character as a being supremely wise and good*. And I look upon it as an instance of this author’s mean spirit; that in neither of the two times he has written against me on this subject he has done me the justice to observe, that among the *Errata* published at the head of my *Two Discourses*, I had desired the reader to correct the 26th line of my 6th page, by adding my explication of the lawgiver’s character, *considered as a being supremely wise and good*. This caution was put in, on purpose to prevent such objections as my opposer has raised against me: and had been printed in its proper page, but that the sheet was wrought off sooner than I expected. He best knows, whether he ever read the *Errata* or not: and if he did not, when he was resolved to write against me, even that omission was an injustice to me. However no excuse relating to this omission will stand him in stead, when every one may see, that in the body of *the Discourse* it self, from the bottom of pag. 20. to the middle of pag. 21, I expressly and largely argue upon *the known wisdom and goodness* of God, in the character of *our lawgiver*, as the ground of our obligation to obey what he *in his supreme wisdom and goodness* thinks fit to enjoin to us, where there is good evidence that the institution is really his.

But when *the Vindicator* argues concerning positive institutions, * that they all seem to have had respect to such a dis-

* *Vindic.* pag. 26.

disposition 'of things, from which their relation and obligation has arisen;' I would intreat him to speak out, and tell us plainly; whether notwithstanding this † *seemings of a respect to the disposition of things*, it is not *the divine † command*, considered in the particulars already mentioned, that gives *the force of the obligation*; whether there would really have been any † *obligation* to practise a particular external rite in a † religious view, without *God's command* for that purpose: and further, whether when the allwise God sees such a disposition of things, as may render a certain external rite useful in some moral respects to the subjects of his government, *his command* is not sufficient to claim the subject's obedience, even though he does not discover to them *that disposition of things*, which he himself sees, and for the sake of which he enjoins the ceremony. If he will do me justice, he is able to testify for me, that I lay the foundation of all divine institutions in God's seeing that they are fit for and will be useful to the subjects of his government, and not in *arbitrary will and pleasure* to shew his own authority. The foundation of our obligation to obey is the declared mind of the lawgiver, who has a right to our obedience, and who is himself so perfectly wise and good, as to deserve no suspicion of enjoining any thing to us, but what is really fit and useful for us. The reason why he enjoins at all is, because, in

†††† Particularly, I ask Mr. Fleming: whether, notwithstanding any *seeming fitness* of pouring oyl upon, the meat-offerings of old, and putting frankincense thereto, there would have been any the least obligation upon the Israelites to make these additions to the *fine flour*, which was properly the meat-offering; or whether there would have been any obligation, in a religious view, to offer up the *fine flour* itself, notwithstanding the evident fitness of owning God as the giver of every thing they enjoyed; if the command of God himself, by Moses, had not made it their duty: and whether this command, as it is laid down, Lev. II. 1. was not sufficient to require the people's obedience, even though neither they, nor perhaps Moses himself, might know all the reasons for which God thought fit to make this appointment, whatever probable conjectures he might make. If we will pretend to go upon *seeming fitnesses*, or *seeming respects to the disposition of things*, in the affair of religious rites and ceremonies; the command of God will be of no effect; and moreover there will be no end of the rites and ceremonies, which ecclesiastical governours (such as those in Popish countries) may impose by meer human authority, or indeed which we may superstitiously impose upon ourselves. But a full satisfaction, that there is a command of God, and that he is an allwise and righteous and gracious governour, who has a right to our obedience, will rationally produce that obedience.

14 *A farther Defence of two Discourses,*

in the circumstances in which he appoints any institution, he sees it is fit and may be useful. But it is *his command*, arising from the reason which he sees for it, that lays the obligation upon us, whether he is pleased to declare to us the reason of the command along with the command itself, or not. And if this be not the case, I still insist upon it, that the Jews were under no obligation to obey the far greatest part of the institutions delivered by Moses. I thought I had spoken my mind concerning this point so fully and clearly, in pag. 17 and 18 of my *Defence*, as scarce to leave room for an objection: and am glad, that since Mr. *Fl.* is dissatisfied with it, he has, in pag. 30, 31. of this his *Vindication*, quoted the substance of it, which I desire the reader carefully to consult.

But before he comes to the consideration of the Mosaic institutions in general, he takes great pains to * prove what no body denies; that the Israelites were made acquainted with the *reasons* and *designs* for which *circumcision* and the *passover* were appointed; and that those reasons were good, and well suited to their condition. All this is allowed. But what is it to the purpose? What if that people was made acquainted with the design of these two institutions, and approved their fitness? Will this prove, that they saw God's reasons for all the other numerous institutions enjoined to them; or that they were under no obligation to obey any institutions, the particular grounds and reasons whereof they were not acquainted with? Will it prove, that those only, who had penetration enough to see into the reasons of all the other institutions, were obliged to obey them; and that all the remainder, throughout the whole host of Israel, were under no obligation? If it does not prove this; it proves nothing to Mr. *Fleming's* purpose. Let us see therefore how he works up his argument, in opposition to what he had quoted from me in pag. 30 and 31.

He says, pag. 32. ' Although I doubt not, but there was a
' *reason* for every one of the *Jewish injunctions*, and do think
' that learned men have well accounted for numbers of
' them; yet I am not sure, that that people were not bet-
' ter acquainted with *their own circumstances*, and with the
' *dispositions* and *customs* of their heathen neighbours, than
' even

* *Vindic.* pag. 26, 27, 28.

‘ even those *learned men*, who, at this distance, have rationally accounted for many of their institutions : and therefore I am not sure, that God did not think proper to acquaint that people with the reason of them. I am, on the contrary, of opinion, that they did discern *some reason* of every injunction, besides *the will and pleasure of the lawgiver.*’

The reader is desired to observe, that the whole force of this argument lies in these words : *I am not sure ; nay, I am of opinion*, on the contrary side. He *is sure*, it seems, and so am I ; that God was pleased to give some reasons, why he enjoined the two rites of *circumcision* and *the passover* : and if he pretends to form any conclusion at all from hence ; it must be just such a one, whereby he had * before proved, *that the stigma of bigotry is but too justly fixed on the party of the anabaptists*, because one of their number had published certain expressions which in his judgment fix that character upon him.

But notwithstanding Mr. *Fleming* is of opinion, in the case before us ; yet I observe he himself *is not sure*. And even if the people of the Jews did discern some reason for every injunction besides the [declared] will and pleasure of the lawgiver, which I, on the contrary, from the absolute silence of Scripture, verily believe they did not, notwithstanding ‘ they were better acquainted with their own circumstances, and with the dispositions of their heathen neighbours, than those learned men, who at this distance ‘ have rationally accounted for many of their institutions’ : yet, for the reasons already assigned, I still insist, that it was the command of their lawgiver, known and considered in the character in which I have described him, that bound upon them the obligation to obedience ; and would have done so, even if they had been *less acquainted with the dispositions and customs of their heathen neighbours*, than they were. Upon comparing the Old Testament with the New, I find good reason to believe : that many of the ceremonies of the Mosaic law had, in the mind of the institutor, their principal view to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the dispensation of the gospel under his conduct ; besides that God saw them to be fit and useful to the particular people to whom they were enjoined.

But

* *Kindie*, pag. xv, of the Introduction,

16 *A farther Defence of two Discourses,*

But Mr. *Fleming*, observing that in the two institutions of *circumcision* and *the passover* the *design* or *reason* was obvious, will needs * have it, that, ‘ if any *ceremonial* was ‘ enjoined without farther reasons than *meer will and pleasure*, ‘ it does not suit the case before us.’ Now this is no other than begging the question. For *the case before us* is the whole question about the foundation of obedience to positive institutions : concerning which I have declared my mind, that *where there is good evidence of their proceeding from God*; the considering of his character as *our rightful lawgiver*, and in *himself supremely wise and good*, is foundation enough to claim our obedience : but Mr. *Fleming*’s opinion is, that all this is to stand for nothing, unless the *reason* and *intention* of the particular institutions is made known to us. I am as clear in the point as he ; that ‘ in the † gospel dispensation, (and ‘ he knows that I add, even in the Law itself) no one thing is ‘ enjoined from *the meer pleasure* of the lawgiver.’ There is therefore no dispute between us about Christ’s authority : and consequently no ground for the mean insinuation, in the same paragraph, as if I thought ‘ Christ had authority ‘ from God to demand our obedience to *such things* which ‘ had nothing more than *meer pleasure* to support the demand.’ I have never represented the positive institutions of the divine being as *arbitrary impositions* ; never argued for an implicate observance of positive rites, *where meer pleasure only makes the demand*. I agree most heartily with the gentleman quoted in pag. 32. of *the Vindication* : that ‘ positive appointments are of quite a different nature from ‘ *arbitrary impositions*, with which they are too often confounded : that the idea of *arbitrary* implies a *weakness* ‘ incompatible to the divine nature ; whose perfection it is ‘ to do nothing but for some *wise reason* and for some *good end* : nor can such a blemish ever cleave to the government, any more than to the nature of God, as an *arbitrary* act ; that is, an act of the divine will without a ‘ *wise reason*, and for no good end.’ My opponent indeed paints me out in very bad colours : but those very writings of mine, which he so zealously opposes, shew that they do not belong to me. My own explication of that very sentence, which he turns so much to my reproach, shews, that

that I include in the obligation to obey ritual institutions *the character of that divine being from whom they proceed, considered as a wise and gracious lawgiver.* Nay, I say expressly in pag. 17. of my *Defence*; that *by considering who this lawgiver is, I plainly shew my belief, that he never appoints any one ritual institution for the sake of meer will and pleasure, but for wise and useful and gracious purposes.* This my opponent acknowledges, and quotes from me, in pag. 30. of his *Vindication*: and yet, in pag. 32d and 33d, he intirely overlooks it, and represents me as arguing from *meer will and pleasure* in the lawgiver, without taking the least notice of the stress, which both in my original *Discourse* and in the *Defence* of it I had laid upon the consideration of his *character.* Let the reader judge of the fairness of this treatment.

But he thinks he has a great advantage against me for affirming, that the gracious method taken under the dispensation of the gospel, with relation to ritual institutions, *alters nothing in the nature of the obligation.* In his 34th page he quotes a passage from me to that effect: and thereupon triumphs, that ‘I have here fully explained myself, and shewn *the undue stress* laid by me upon meer authority.’ Nay in a few lines after, he amplifies to such a degree as to say: that ‘if he mistakes not, I have here set *meer will* above the rank of *moral obligation.*’ I shall take the liberty to quote my own words a little more largely than my opponent does: and then, comparing them with explanations of my own which he ought to have taken notice of, appeal to my readers, whether it was not a great *mistake* indeed, or rather something much worse, that led him thus extravagantly to charge me. In pag. 16. and 17. of my *Defence* I ask, whether God is *our superior* under the gospel; *such a superior, as has a right and authority to prescribe rules to us.* And then I add: ‘If he is; then we are, even under the dispensation of the gospel, obliged to obey him in all those cases, wherein his authority is visibly concerned, whether he condescends to let us know the reason of his prescriptions or not. Indeed he is pleased, under the dispensation of the gospel, to let us know the gracious and useful purposes; proposed by him in the institutions en-

D

‘ joined

18 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

‘ joined to us. But this alters nothing in the nature of the obligation.’

I say the same thing still: *It alters nothing in the nature of the obligation.* And yet I acknowledge, and my unfair opponent knows I acknowledge, that hereby *an additional obligation* is laid upon us. The obligation to obey the mind of God, in such ritual institutions as are *known to proceed from him*, is the same, the very same, in all dispensations. And yet it is attended with some advantages in some dispensations, which it has not in others: which advantages create *an additional obligation* upon the subject to obey them; but do not *alter the nature of the original obligation* itself. This sentiment, concerning *additional obligation*, though not expressed in those very words, I had most plainly, and somewhat largely, set forth in my original *Discourse*, pag. 21, 22. as applied to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper, after arguing about the obligation to obey divine institutions in general. And to the same purpose is what I say in my *Defence*, pag. 18. ‘ Whatever explication is given, ‘ as *the reason and design* of a positive institution, is all *additional grace and goodness*: but as to the institution itself; ‘ either the authority with which it is attended is sufficient ‘ to command our obedience; or else we are under no obligation to obey it.’ The *additional grace and goodness* here spoken of are plainly with me *an additional obligation* to obedience. And yet if the authority with which the institution is attended, when known or believed to be the authority of a rightful lawgiver, supremely wise and good, is not sufficient to command our obedience; all the *explications* in the world will never be able to do it. And this was *the authority* I meant: as is plain from what I had mentioned about a dozen lines before; ‘ that *acknowledged* authority ‘ from the Father, whereby Jesus instituted his two ordinances, to be obeyed by the subjects of his kingdom.’ If this is not sufficient *to command the obedience* of such as *own themselves convinced* that Jesus had such authority; if notwithstanding this, men will refuse to submit, because they themselves do not see *what good ends* the ordinances will answer: I still say as I said before; that ‘ I shall have no ‘ great opinion of such mens fidelity, let them talk ever so ‘ loudly of their regard to moral obligations.’

I would

I would intreat the reader, before he goes any further, to reflect on what has been already said concerning *divine institutions* in general: and thence to judge, whether the obligation to obey them lies in *our seeing the respect to such a disposition of things, as we think creates the obligation*; or whether it lies in *the known command of the lawgiver himself, considered as supremely wise and good, and our rightful governour; who himself sees the suitableness and usefulness of the institution to those who are under his moral government, and therefore enjoins them to practice it.* I humbly desire this favour of my reader; that he may see I argue for truth's sake, and not for victory.

Having thus considered the case of ritual institutions in general, I think it proper to observe; that what *the Vindicator* has thrown in, from pag. 26. to the 30th, as to *his own opinion*, and the opinion of *others*, concerning the *reason* of the rite of circumcision, and its correspondency to baptism, is either begging the question, or else quite wide from the purpose of the controversy between him and me. Whatever Dr. *Patrick* did think, or Mr. *Fleming* does think, to have been *the reason* of this rite; I have shewn, that neither the first institution of it to Abraham, nor the continuance of it in the Mosaic dispensation, affects the case of baptism in the christian church. And yet my opposer goes on with his own *suppositions*, as if nothing had ever been said against them: produces his *comparisons*, as things never disputed: talks of the application of *baptismal water* to men who embrace christianity, and to *their offspring*, and of their having *the gospel seal* applied to them and to *their offspring* or *households*, as if no body had ever once doubted concerning the practice of infant baptism as founded on Scripture. Nay he roundly affirms, pag. 29. what in all reason he ought first to have proved; 'that as Abraham's faith entitled him and his *infant descendents* to the seal of circumcision; so the *faith* of converted *Jews* or *Gentiles* entitled them and their families or descendents to the seal of baptism.' And when he has thus begged the whole question, he argues upon it; that 'therefore to insist upon *the after-posterity* of converted christians being educated in the same *faith* with their parents, before they receive the seal of baptism, does appear to be an *innovation* upon the order or oeconomy of po-
sitive,

20 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

‘*sitive, initial rites*: and is so forward as to add; that there is not any thing more evident in *the gospel history*, than a *correspondency* in these initial rites, as to the subjects of them.’

Upon all this I observe: that whatever my opponent wants in argument, he makes up in confident assertion. He undertook to refute a short *discourse*, founded upon a very different plan; which plan he ought to have overturned, if he had been able. When I had there represented the gospel church as consisting of no other members, than such as make actual profession of their own faith, and therefore vastly different from preceeding constitutions, which admitted infants: he should have shewn that Christ designed infants to be members of his church. And whatever were formerly the *uses* and *designs* of the abrogated rite of *circumcision*; when I had shewn, that the baptism instituted by Jesus Christ has a direct view to *repentance* and turning from sin; that it exhibits the hope of pardon to all those who sincerely comply with it; and denotes a personal profession of believing Christ’s doctrine and of resolving to be guided by it; and when upon these principles I had argued in my *Defence*, pag. 23, 24, ‘that therefore it could not be the mind of Christ, that any other should be baptized, than those who make such profession:’ one would have thought, that he should either in his first attack on that *Discourse* have disproved the principles upon which it proceeded; or at least in his present *Vindication* should have produced something like an argument tending that way. Instead of all which, he lays his main stress upon allusions drawn by himself, from *circumcision*, considered as *the seal* of the *Abrahamic covenant*, to *baptism* considered as *the gospel seal* with regard to christians and their offspring: upon allusions, I say, drawn by himself, from things which he calls by such names as he pleases, without any authority for it; and not upon any passages of Scripture, authorizing him to call those things by such names; much less upon any passages of Scripture affirming what he makes the consequence of his own allusions.

He lays his main stress in arguing from a former dispensation, the great end of which was already accomplished, to what *he thinks* ought to succeed it under the gospel; without

without considering whether Christ the lawgiver thought fit it should be so or not; and indeed without considering, that Christ has shewn he did not think fit it should be so, but has interposed his authority as lawgiver, to shew that he would have it otherwise. Mr. *Fleming* takes no notice at all of the authority of Christ in ordaining the rite of baptism under his own dispensation: but taking for granted that there must be a *correspondency* between this and a former dispensation, in all the particulars wherein he would have it so, the drift of his argument is; *Thus it was in the one dispensation, and therefore so it must be in the other.* Nay he sometimes argues with respect to baptism, as if Christ had nothing to do in the institution of it, but that it came as it were of course, by a sort of natural and necessary consequence, into the christian dispensation, whether the author of that dispensation would have it so or not. In pag. 68. of his *Vindication*, speaking of proselyte-baptism, he not only allows, but roundly affirms, ‘that the use of *baptismal water* was of *divine appointment* among the Jews:’ and opposes me for having said with regard to this practice, ‘that our Lord did not leave an ordinance of his own to be explained and applied by a practice of men which had no divine command to support it.’ He is not willing to allow, that the baptism in use in Christ’s church was *an ordinance of Christ’s own*. And to lead his readers into his scheme he equivocates, and tells them in the next words, that *it does not appear that water-baptism had its origine in the institution of Jesus*: and repeats the same again at the bottom of the page, in answer to what I had said concerning baptism as *an institution of Christ*. This I call equivocating: because it is evident, that when I spoke of baptism as *an institution of Christ*, I did not speak of *water baptism* in general, or any other water baptism than that, which it is manifest Christ did institute, and that in the most solemn manner, and in the character of lawgiver, MAT. xxviii. 18, 19.

Very like to this is his way of arguing with regard to the subject of baptism. Neglecting intirely the consideration of Christ as lawgiver in his church, the train of his argument is this: ‘The subjects of circumcision were in a former dispensation both adult persons and infants: therefore the subjects

22 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

‘ subjects of baptism under the gospel must be infants as well as adult.’ And the only proofs he brings to support this argument, in the pages now under consideration, are inferences drawn from allusions of his own to a former dispensation.

But he is greatly mistaken, if he thinks that Christ’s ordinance of baptism stands upon such a precarious foundation. It is founded on the command of God, delivered by Christ the lawgiver, who had * authority to institute ; and must therefore be administered to such, and only such, as he himself, or his followers commissioned by him, shew he would have it administered to : just as circumcision was founded on the command of God, delivered first to Abraham by an angel from heaven, and afterwards to the Jews by Moses ; and was therefore to be administered, under those dispensations, to such and only such, as God himself thought proper to appoint.

This divine authority of Christ as lawgiver is the foundation on which we build ; and the proper foundation on which ought to be built what we affirm concerning his own ordinance of baptism : and the ascribing to Christ his own ordinance quite overturns Mr. *Fleming’s* hypothesis. Laying Christ’s divine authority as my foundation, I consider in my *discourse* what is contained in the institution itself : and observe, and prove as I go along ; that the baptism which Christ ordained to be practised in his church carries in its very institution, and likewise in the New Testament account of the ends for which it was instituted, a view to repentance, of which all stand in need, though some are sinners in a higher degree than others ; that it exhibits the hope of pardon to all those who sincerely comply with it ; and that it denotes a personal profession of believing Christ’s doctrine, and of resolving to be guided by it. From these observations, supported with proofs, I conclude what was *the mind of Christ*, relating to the application of his own ordinance. And ‘ these principles †, taken from the manifest design of the ordinance itself, in its institution, in its

‘ mini-

* In delivering the commission itself, Christ makes the *authority* he had received, the very foundation of the institution. *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth : go ye therefore, and make disciples and baptize.* Mat. xxviii. 18, 19. † See my *Discourses on positive institutions*, pag. 45.

‘ ministration during the apostles days, and in the reason-
 ‘ ings of the inspired writers themselves upon it, belong-
 ‘ ing in the nature of the thing to every individual member
 ‘ of Christ’s church, as well as to any one, are of all other
 ‘ the fittest to determine who are the subjects to whom he
 ‘ would have his ordinance administred.’ They effectually
 overturn that whole hypothesis, which Mr. *Fleming* builds
 upon allusions; so that there is no necessity to give it a par-
 ticular consideration. However, because throughout his
 whole book he lays so much stress upon it, I shall consi-
 der his hypothesis itself, his doctrine of *the seals*, blend-
 ed as it is with the affair of *the households*: and hope to
 shew, that his doctrine is wholly without foundation; and
 that the Scripture-doctrine of *the households*, which he re-
 presents as favouring his scheme, is directly against him.

In the first place I observe, that Mr. *Fl.* takes for granted
 what the Scripture nowhere affirms. He takes for granted, that
 circumcision was to Abraham’s posterity, and particularly to
 the * *infant descendents* themselves, a *seal of the covenant*:
 whereas according to Scripture account, in the only place
 where circumcision is ever said to have been a *seal*, it was a *seal*
 to no other person in the world than Abraham himself: and
 to him it was, as St. Paul observes, Rom. iv. 11. *a seal of the*
righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised;
that he might be the father of all them that believe though
they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to
them also. In the same verse the apostle calls circumcision
 a *sign or token*: and does it in the use of the same Greek †
 word, by which the Septuagint translate the original account
 of the institution, Gen. xvii. 11. *Ye shall circumcise the*
flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant
betwixt me and you. And a visible *token* it was, through
 all their generations; being made in their flesh, as is ob-
 served in the words just now quoted, and presently after,
 in ver. 13. St. Paul therefore, in the place above cited,
 uses the words *token*, and *seal*, both of them with great
 propriety, but in very different senses. *Abraham received*
the sign [or token] circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of
the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised: that is, he
 had that rite by divine command administred to him, which
 was,

* *Vindic.* pag. 29, lin. 9. compared with lin. 4.

† σημειον.

24 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

was, both to himself and to all his posterity, *a token of the covenant into which God entred with them*; but which was to him, and to him alone, *a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had before his circumcision*. It is as plain, that it was not to Abraham's infant-descendents, or to any other, *a seal of the righteousness of faith*, as it is plain, that it was to him *a seal of it*. To him it was *a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had*: but to them it could not be; because they neither had that faith, nor in their infant state could have it. Their circumcision could not be *a seal* to them of what they had not: but it was with great propriety to Abraham *a seal of that remarkable faith, which he had before he was circumcised*. I say, *that remarkable faith*. For when first the promise was made to him, Gen. xii. 2, 3. *that God would make him a great nation, and that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed*; the probabilities were strong against him; especially as the son, through whom this promise should be fulfilled, was to come from his wife Sarah, who was both old and barren, and himself 75 years of age, as the text adds, ver. 4. The longer they both lived, the less outward likelihood there was of the fulfilment of the promise: and least of all at the time when Abraham received *the seal of the righteousness of his remarkable faith*. He was then 99 years old; and his wife but * 9 or 10 years younger, and always barren. But as the apostle observes in the context of the passage where he mentions the seal; *against hope he believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform*. Rom. iv. 18—21. And then he sums up all, in ver. 22. *And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness*.

It is evident from these verses, compared with ver. 11. before quoted, that *the righteousness* here mentioned as *imputed to Abraham*, is that, of which circumcision was mentioned as *the seal*, in ver. 11. And it is as evident, that

it

it was this *seal* to Abraham only, and to no other person in the world: to him, *as the father of all them that believe*; as the apostle himself assures us in that 11th verse; consequently not to any other person whatever. And yet it is with great propriety that the apostle in the same verse calls circumcision *a token*, which is its usual name, in multitudes of other passages of Scripture; as it was to Abraham himself, to his posterity, and to all those throughout the world who should take notice of it, a visible *mark* in the flesh of all the males belonging to this family, designed to put them in mind of *the covenant* into which God had entred with them.

But there is a heaven-wide difference, between being to the whole world *a token* of a former promise of future blessings to a nation, and being to one particular person *a seal of the righteousness of his own faith*. And inasmuch as circumcision is throughout the Scripture never spoken of as *a seal* to any other than Abraham alone; I would desire Mr. *Fleming's* readers to observe how far he is out of the way, in calling it over and over again *the seal of the covenant*, with respect to Abraham's *infant-descendants*, and in allusion to it calling baptism *the seal of the gospel covenant*, and arguing at a venture, from the seal of the one covenant to the seal of the other, for application to the same subjects; whereas the Scripture never once calls baptism *the seal of the gospel covenant*, any more than it calls circumcision *the seal of that which was made with Abraham*.

This I shall more particularly observe bye and bye. Mean time I shall briefly take notice of what Mr. *Fl.* sais in his *Vindication*, pag. 77, 78, in answer to what I had before advanced (in my *Defence*, pag. 46.) concerning Abraham's being the only person to whom circumcision was *a seal*. I acknowledge with him, that circumcision is in the xviith of Genesis not only called *the token of God's covenant*, but figuratively likewise *the covenant itself, the covenant between God and Abraham and his seed after him in their generations*; and that this *covenant* was to be *in their flesh for an everlasting covenant*. And yet I insist, as I did before, that there is a vast difference between saying this, and affirming what the Scripture no where affirms, *that circumcision was to infants the seal of the covenant*. Though it was, in and upon their flesh, *the token of the covenant* into which God entred

E

with

26 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

with Abraham and his posterity ; yet being *the seal* of no other thing than *the righteousness of faith*, it neither was nor could be to them any *seal* at all. The apostle does not affirm, that it was to Abraham himself *a seal of the covenant* into which God entred with regard to his posterity : but that it was *a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he himself had being yet uncircumcised*. To him alone it was such a token of God's high complacency, in constituting him *the father of all the faithful* in future generations, as *sealed to him*, and gave him a joyful sense of, the imputation of *the righteousness of faith*. To others it was only *a token of the covenant* ; an outward visible token, in looking upon which they might satisfy themselves, that what God had promised in that covenant would be fulfilled : which things every one may see are very different.

x { We are therefore no longer right in calling *circumcision* a *seal*, than while we apply it to the person, *to whom* the Scripture saith it was *a seal*, and to the thing, *of which* the Scripture saith it was *a seal*. If we apply it to other persons and other things, we offend, and are in danger of running into endless mazes of error and perplexity. And this is the very case before us. The venturing to call *circumcision the seal of the Abrahamic covenant* to infants, because St. Paul saith it was to Abraham himself *a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had before his circumcision*, has led many good people into a great mistake relating to the christian dispensation : in which they took for granted, though without sufficient warrant, that there must be an application of the rite of baptism to all the same subjects, to whom *circumcision* was applied under the covenant made with Abraham. Mr. *Fleming* has been led into this mistake among others : and in it he is resolved he will continue. Rather than depart a hairs breadth from old prejudices, he will pervert the apostle's words, ROM. IV. 11. and humbly imagine, (see pag. 78. of his *Vindication*) that *his authority* in using the word *Seal* is as good as St. Paul's could make it ; though it is manifest, that he uses it to a quite different purpose, and applies it to persons to whom the apostle never once applied it. Though the apostle does use the word *Seal* ; yet he neither applies it to the same persons, nor affirms the same thing concerning it which Mr. *Fl.* affirms, when he pretends

to make it *the seal of the covenant* to infants. Let the reader make his own reflections upon this conduct.

But I now observe more particularly in the second place : that the Scripture never once calls baptism *the seal of the gospel covenant*, any more than it calls circumcision *the seal of that which was made with Abraham*. I would not spend time in such kind of observations, did I not see ; that unscriptural expressions, rendered plausible by allusions of mens own making, from one dispensation to another, are made the foundation of schemes intirely different from and inconsistent with the Scripture account. And how insignificant soever this observation in particular may seem at first sight ; I would intreat my readers to consider, how unavoidably they must lead themselves into mistakes in the affair of baptism, if they neglect to consult the New Testament account of it, and upon unscriptural expressions build schemes of unwarranted relation to dispensations long since superseded.

Consult the New Testament account of baptism, (which in all reason we ought to make our rule, with regard to an ordinance of the gospel-dispensation) and you will find : that in the institution itself it is directed to be administred to such *in all nations*, as are first by *teaching* made *disciples* ; Mat. xxviii. 19. and that there is no more commission given to baptize any other persons *in any nation*, than there is commission to baptize idiots, madmen, and professed infidels. You will likewise find : that as *we become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus* ; so *by being baptized into Christ*, we [ourselves, by our own act and deed] *put on Christ*, in a voluntary profession of being his ; GAL. III. 26, 27. that *for this very end we are buried with Christ by baptism into death* ; that *like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life* ; Rom. vi. 4. that *believing in Jesus is made the condition of being baptized* ; Acts viii. 37. *If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest* : and that the very thing which renders baptism *salutary to us is the answer of a good conscience towards God* ; 1 Pet. iii. 21. Now all these texts give such an account of baptism, as shews, that infants are incapable of what is requisite to it ; and consequently, that according to the mind of Christ they are not the subjects of it.

There is therefore no room, no foundation or warrant,

28 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

for making arbitrary allusions of our own to former dispensations the rule of practice under the gospel: nor can any allusions to former oeconomies be of force in this case, unless Christ the author of the gospel dispensation tells us it is his mind it should be so, and so far only as he declares he would have it so: and this throws down to the ground *the whole scheme* of arguing from *circumcision* to *baptism*, whether considered as *seals* or not. But more especially there is no room, no foundation or warrant, for making unscriptural expressions the basis of a scheme, which opposes the plain Scripture account of christian baptism: which yet is the case, in calling it *the seal of the gospel-covenant*, in allusion to circumcision as *the seal of the Abrahamic covenant*, when the Scripture never once calls either of them by such names.

Baptism, I say, is never once in Scripture called *a seal* at all: much less is it called *the seal of the gospel covenant*: and much less still is it affirmed to be so *to infants*. There is indeed mention made of *a seal* in the New Testament: but it is not baptism. The primitive christians, the Ephesians in particular, as the apostle appeals to them, EPH. 1. 13. *after that they believed, were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise; which,* he adds in the next verse, *is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of God's glory.* So, writing to the CORINTHIANS, 2d epistle, 1. 22. he saith; *Who also hath sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* And if I mistake not, to the like purpose, though not in the use of the same word, is ROM. VIII. 16. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God.* The Spirit therefore is, or at least has been, according to Scripture account, *a seal* to God's people, under the gospel-dispensation. But baptism is never said to have been so. And whereas it may be asked, 'may not baptism seem to be *a seal* of the remission of past sins, to those who sincerely comply with it in obedience to Christ's direction: I would answer; that if it *may seem* to be so, yet I will not venture to affirm that it is so; because the Scripture does not therein bear me out. But if it were so; yet even that would be a very different thing from making it *the seal of the gospel covenant* to infants.

Upon the whole of what has been hitherto said concerning
seals,

seals, I observe: that the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, speak of them as *special indications of God's high approbation of and complacency in particular persons, granted with an immediate view to their own personal faith in him*: and, that no positive rite, either of the Old or New Testament, is ever once in Scripture call'd a *Seal*, with respect to those in general, to whom it is ordered to be administered. I have shewn, that circumcision never was, to any one soul of Abraham's descendents, *the seal of the Abrahamic covenant*; though it was a rite ordered by divine authority to be administered to all his male descendents, *in token of a covenant* made with him: and that baptism never was, according to Scripture account, *a seal of the gospel covenant*, even to believers themselves, much less to infants; though it was a rite ordered by divine authority to be ministered to all those who profess to believe Christ's doctrine; and was design'd to represent their *obligation* to die unto sin, and live unto God. If christians in general could have been content to consider both *circumcision* and *baptism* as *ordinances of God*, suited to the respective dispensations of his mind wherein he ordained them; and could have forborne laying a stress upon *conjectural inferences of their own*, from one dispensation to another: the unscriptural hypothesis of *the seals* had never been thought of. The right way to avoid the confusion it has introduced, is to throw it *wholly aside*; and to take Christ's ordinances as we find them delivered by him, and described by his apostles in the New Testament.

But I observe still further in the third place: that when Mr. *Fleming* calls circumcision *the seal of the covenant to infants*, he himself is not able to tell *what covenant* it was which it sealed to them; particularly whether it was *the gospel covenant* or not. Nor can I at all wonder, that wiser men than he should be confounded, when through custom they are led to affirm what has no warrant in Scripture. If it was any covenant *different from the gospel*, which circumcision *sealed* to infants of old: then there is no force in arguing, that infants must now have the gospel covenant sealed to them, because infants had then *a different covenant* sealed to them under a former dispensation. Nor can any other thing in the world give authority for administering any rite to infants as *a seal of the gospel covenant*,
than

30 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

than the command of the author of that covenant; which command if Mr. *Fleming* will produce, we will readily obey it. If the covenant which God made with *Abraham* was *one and the same* with the *gospel covenant*, considered as a dispensation of the mind of God; (and it is in that sense alone that there is any room to argue upon it in the affair before us) then there is no difference between *promise* and *fulfilment*: and then how came it to pass, that any other than the same *seal* was made use of? What account is there to be given, why under the *gospel* God appointed the rite of baptism, and did not continue the rite of circumcision; but that in his wisdom he saw it better suited to this dispensation, considered as *very different* from the former? And if it be really *different*, as different, (besides all relation to temporal blessings in the land of Canaan) as the *promise* of the *Messiahs* coming is from the *Messiahs actual coming* and *establishing the spiritual kingdome* which it was promised he should set up; then there is no foundation for arguing, that a *new rite*, appointed under a *new dispensation*, must be administered to infants, merely because infants had a *different rite* administered to them under a former *different dispensation*.

If in an affair of positive institution we would lay stress, as our pædobaptist brethren do, upon inferences relating to former dispensations; the argument would be directly in our favour, and against them. For though circumcision was, as properly in the flesh of the male infants as of adult males, a visible *token* of the covenant, wherein God promised that the *Messiah* should arise from *Abraham's* family, and consequently infants were as properly as the adult males the subjects of a rite which under that dispensation was appointed to betoken the *Messiah's future coming*: yet when this promised *Messiah* is come, and *another rite* is by *him* appointed to be a *token* of *voluntary subjection to him*, in the laws of that spiritual kingdome, which in fulfilment of prophecy he has *actually* set up; the very reason and design of its appointment necessarily excludes them from being subjects of it. And this is the case of *baptism* under the *gospel dispensation*: which the New Testament represents as the *token of a voluntary subjection to Jesus*, in all the laws of his spiritual kingdome, considered as the promised *Messiah*, in whom all nations should be blessed.

But

I. relating to positive Institutions. 31

But I wish that they who affirm the Abrahamic covenant to be *the very same with the gospel*, and who thence infer, that infants must be subjects of a rite under the one, because they were subjects of a rite instituted under the other, would consider that their assertion itself has no foundation in Scripture. The only semblance of a Scripture argument for making them *one and the same*, is taken from the words of St. Paul, in the III^d chapter of his epistle to the Galatians. In the 8th verse of which chapter he has these words: *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith* *, *preached before the gospel unto Abraham; saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.* Here, according as the words are rendred in our translation, *the gospel* is said to have been preached to Abraham, in that promise, *In thee shall all nations be blessed.* The meaning is, that in that promise *these good tydings* were given to him. But allowing it to be a *gospel-promise*, as it was a promise of the coming of the Messiah, who was *in due time* to be the founder of *the gospel-constitution*: if the delivery of this promise to Abraham, attended with the ordinance of circumcision, is a good argument why a certain rite, *different from circumcision*, should be administred to infants when the Messiah the subject of the promise should appear: then the delivery of that more ancient *gospel-promise*, for the comfort of our first parents after their fall, *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*, being attended with no positive ordinance, is as good an argument why no religious rite should be administred, either to infants or adult persons, when this promised *Seed of the woman* should appear: and yet nothing is more plain, than that when *this promised Seed* did come, he himself, by authority from God, did institute ordinances whereby he would be acknowledged; and particularly one, whereby they who choose to become his disciples should voluntarily profess this their choice. I mention these things only to shew; that there is no room or foundation for arguing from one dispensation to another, to prove that *positive institutions* under one dispensation must needs be regulated by what was done under another, where God himself has not thought fit to interpose directly, and to tell us he would have it so. There will be no end of the confusion this will lead to, if we go on in this manner.

And

* προεπηγγελισατο.

32 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

And this is a sufficient answer to what Mr. *Fleming* advances from the 16th, 17th, and 18th verses of the same III^d chapter to the Galatians, in pag. 29. of his *Appendix*: where he refers to these verses to prove that the Abrahamic covenant is *the very christian covenant, the same in nature and essence,—— a covenant referring to and including Christ the promised Messiah.* I say again: if this was the case; so did *the promise* to our first parents, *that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head*, refer to and include Christ the promised Messiah, and therefore was of the same nature and essence *in promise*; as *the gospel* properly speaking was *in its completion*: and yet there is a heaven-wide difference between the two dispensations of *promise* and of *completion*; and consequently the non-appointing of ordinances at the delivery of this *first gospel-promise* is no argument why no ordinances must be observed when *the promised Seed* himself should appear. No more is the appointing *circumcision* to be administered to infants, at the time when a *subsequent gospel-promise* was delivered to Abraham; an argument why a rite *different from circumcision* should be administered to infants after the appearance of *the promised Seed*; especially when the very rite, which at his appearance he himself did institute, was, according to his own account and that of his inspired followers, such as infants are incapable of.

But unexpectedly so it happens; that though *the author of the Appendix to the Plea for Infants* is very positive, that *the Abrahamic covenant was the very christian covenant, the same in nature and essence*; yet *the Vindicator* of that same *Appendix* makes these two covenants as different as *the old and the new*. See pag. 28. of *the Vindication*: where the author speaks of *the Abrahamic covenant as having had its accomplishment* [I could not have said more myself] *in the coming of the promised Seed who was to bless all nations*: and then immediately adds: that ‘*the seal of THE OLD COVENANT* was now *cancelled*, it having done its office, in preserving one people and family distinct; it was therefore proper, highly fit, that a rite should take place, that should every where intimate, that the old rite was cancelled, and that no distinction any more remained, of sect or nation, in the view of *the new covenant.*’ It is plain, that in the abovewritten quotation the author calls *the A-*
brahamic

I. relating to positive Institutions. 33

Abrahamic covenant the old covenant; and that by way of distinction from *the gospel*, which he as plainly calls *the new covenant*. This he confirms in his next words: where he argues; that ‘the application of *baptismal water* to men who embraced CHRISTIANITY and to their offspring, did and does every where signify the unlimited extent of that favour and protection which THE GOSPEL COVENANT would exhibit.’ And again, pag. 29. he speaks of *the covenant of peculiarity* and *the gospel covenant* as *two distinct covenants*: and affirms, that ‘the history of the positive rites under these covenants gives us no reason to imagine; that the subjects of *either covenant* [observe reader, the subjects of *either covenant*] were to have a change in the manner of applying *the seals*.’

As to Mr. *Fleming*’s doctrine of *the seals*; I have already shewn, that there is no foundation for it in Scripture. I now produce these passages only to shew: that the force of truth has obliged him to acknowledge, that *the Abrahamic covenant* and *the gospel* are not the same but very different covenants; as different as *promise* and *accomplishment*, *old* and *new*, *peculiarity* and *gospel*: and that the arguing from them as being of *the same nature and essence*, and inferring that infants must be the subjects of a rite instituted under the one, because they were the subjects of a *different rite*, for *very different reasons* instituted under the other, has no foundation. At least we have here *Caleb* against *Fleming*, and *Fleming* against *Caleb*: and let him of the two, that speaks most to the purpose, be most regarded.

He, I think, is most in the right, who speaks of *the covenant of peculiarity* and *the gospel covenant* as two distinct covenants, mentioning distinctly *the subjects of either covenant*. And this my opponent does most expressly, *Vindic.* pag. 29. lin. 4, 5, 6. But the same author is very much in the wrong, when about the middle of the same page he affirms: ‘that as *Abraham’s faith* entitled his whole household, and all his male descendants, to *the same rite* that was applied to himself; so upon the *faith* of the convert to christianity, his whole household, or her whole household, were entitled to *the same seal*, and had it actually applied.’ In both parts of this sentence he affirms what is utterly false in fact. For neither did Abraham’s faith en-

34 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

+ title any one soul of his household to circumcision ; nor was it ever administred to any one individual of his descendents in virtue of his faith, but in pursuance of the expresse command of God, which required the male infants to be circumcised at eight days old. Nor did the faith of any convert to christianity ever entitle his or her household to baptism : nor was it ever in the apostolic age applied on any such account ; but only upon the profession which every person made of his or her own faith. What my opponent thus roundly asserts concerning *the households* in general, he is not able to prove ; or so much as to give one instance of it throughout the whole New Testament. If he could do this, I am satisfied he would.

He brings in his confident assertion as a branch of his scheme of *the seals* ; which scheme I have already disproved. But most of the texts, which in the * same and the next page he produces as on his own side, are directly against him ; and the rest nothing to the purpose. Particularly, that text, Luke xix. 9. *This day is salvation come to this house*, is nothing to my opponent's purpose ; because it proves no more, than that *the doctrine of salvation* was now brought and offered to Zachæus's household ; which doctrine if they embraced as heartily as he himself did, they would, as well as he, *be saved* by it, but not otherwise. And the following passage, Acts ii. 39. *The promise is to you and to your children*, most clearly receives its explication from the following words in the same verse ; *and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call*. Which words shew ; that the apostle confines *the promise* to such only of *the posterity*, either of Jews or Gentiles, as should prove to be *the called in Christ Jesus* ; a character which will by no means agree to new-born infants.

+ Then, that text, Acts xvi. 31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house*, is directly against my opponent's cause. For common sense will tell him ; that the jailor was here assured, that *his house* or family should *be saved* in the same way as he himself ; that is, through their own personal *believing in the Lord Jesus Christ*, and not through their master's believing for them.

+ So Cornelius was bid to send for Peter, *who should tell him things*

* Pag. 29. at bottom, and pag. 30. at the top.

I. relating to positive Institutions: 35

things whereby he and all his house should be saved; Acts xi. 14. That is; both he and all his house should be saved, if both he and all his house gave due reception to the word which Peter had to deliver: but there is no promise of *salvation* to the household, or any part of it, in any other way than Cornelius himself was here taught to hope for it; which was a hearty embracing of the gospel when preached to them. But more clearly to our purpose, the historian expressly affirms, Acts xviii. 8. that *Crispus believed in the Lord, with all his house*: that is to say, all his house, all his family, actually believed in the Lord, as well as Crispus himself. And what is added in the same verse confirms this: that many of the *Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized*; that is, just so many as heard and believed, were baptized; but not a soul more. So the household of Stephanas were baptized; 1 Cor. i. 16. And no wonder. For we have in the same epistle a sufficient proof, that this very household of Stephanas were believers; when it is affirmed of them, chap. xvi. 15. that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. Which things I hope Mr. Fleming will not pretend to affirm concerning infants: and yet these things are as plainly and fully affirmed concerning the household, as it is affirmed that the household were baptized.

In all these instances the Scripture doctrine of the households is directly and clearly against Mr. Fleming: and either shews, that there were no infants in these households, (for the households themselves are spoken of as believers, and saved through their own faith, and not that of their masters) or else, that what infants there might be in any of the households were therefore neither spoken of nor thought of, because not capable of faith, nor consequently of baptism.

These things I largely set forth in my * Defence. Which Mr. Fl. did not think fit to answer; or to take any other notice of, than to account me † presumptuous, for concluding that there were no infants in the households. But the thing as above stated speaks for itself. And I would intreat the reader to consider who is most presumptuous: I, who upon plain proof that the households themselves be-
lieved,

36 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

lieved, conclude that either there were no infants in *those households*, or else that the infants are not spoken of because *uncapable of believing*: or Mr. *Fleming*; who though there is not one text affirming that there were infants in the households, yet boldly concludes that there were infants, and further concludes, that those infants were baptized.

Let that one single instance be reviewed, which is more clear and particular than any other, and therefore most fit to be the key for interpreting all the rest; I mean that of the jailor: and it will plainly be seen: 1. That *Paul*

Word preached to the whole family; to all that were in his house.

and Silas spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house; and this in pursuance of the assurance given, that upon believing on the Lord Jesus Christ he and his house should be saved.

Believed by them all.

2. That upon hearing the word preached, *he believed in God with all his house*. That is; he and all his family believed the Word, which Paul and Silas had preached to them all.

All were baptized; as all believed.

3. That upon this their belief, *he and all his house were straitway baptized*. ACTS XVI. 30—34.

We desire no clearer account than this, to shew: either that every single soul in this household *believed the word preached*, and thereby had a right to the *baptism* which followed: or that if there were any infants in the household, all mention concerning them was with good reason omitted as needless, because the things mentioned with relation to *the household* in general were known not to belong to them; and yet no impropriety in saying, that *the household believed the word*, which was preached to them, and that *the household were thereupon baptized*. The same things for substance, though not quite so particularly, are said concerning other *households*.

From the whole of what is recorded in the New Testament concerning *the households* it appears: that whoever in any *household* was baptized, was baptized upon his or her own personal *believing the word preached*, and not upon the faith

faith of the head of the family. Whatever men advance of this latter kind, is nothing else but meer hypothesis. It is brought in by Mr. *Fl.* as a necessary part of his doctrine of *the seals* and their application; the whole of which I have shewn to be without any foundation in Scripture. I have been the larger in confuting it, because his book is full of it: and must therefore intreat the reader, as often as he finds Mr. *Fleming* return to his favorite topics of *the seals* and *the households*, to remember that I have shewn they have no foundation in Scripture.

And with regard to the true Scripture doctrine of *the households*, their being baptized upon their own faith, and not that of their master or head; I would intreat the reader likewise to observe, how natural, how rational this is; and how perfectly agreeable to the other New Testament accounts concerning baptism: particularly to the *Commission* itself, which requires Christ's ministers to *baptize* those in *all nations*, who are first *made disciples* by *teaching*; and not all in every nation, whether they be or be not capable of it and voluntary in it: to the *examples* of persons baptized; among all which there is not one infant mentioned: to the *reasonings* of the apostles upon baptism, as *the answer of a good conscience towards God*, the means whereby we visibly *put on Christ*, and take on us the obligation to *die unto sin* and *live unto God*. And even with regard to the *Abramic* covenant it self, I would desire the reader to observe, how wisely it was ordered; that though under that dispensation wherein the Messiah was exhibited only in *promise*, a rite was ordained, which even in its ministration to infants, did by a mark in their flesh, from age to age keep up the remembrance of that *promise*, and therefore was as properly administered to them as to adult persons; yet when *the promise* was *accomplished*, and the Messiah actually come, such an ordinance was by himself appointed to be complied with by the subjects of his kingdom, as suits those only, who actually acknowledge him for their Lord, and engage obedience to him.

Having thus largely considered Mr. *Fleming's* unscriptural schemes, I now pass on to pag. 35, 36. of his *Vindication*; where he renews against the Anabaptists the charge of *calling in question the capacity or integrity of all*
that

38 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

that declare for infant-baptism. I am weary of personal squabbles: and therefore without making any quotation intreat the reader to consult that part of my *Defence*, pag. 63, 64, where I justly complain of his reflexions. But he now carries them a great deal further: reflecting upon me and the generality of the defenders of adult baptism, as *having call'd in question both the integrity and capacity of infant baptizers*; and adding a great deal to the same purpose, which does not deserve a repetition.

In answer to all that he pretends to build upon quotations from me, I ask him; what he would have a man do, who believes in his conscience, that *sprinkling* is not *baptism*, and that infants are not the persons designed by our Lord Jesus as the subjects of his ordinance? Would he have him belie his own conscience, to please *the numbers* who differ from him? By his way of arguing, he blames us for not doing this. And this, I am sure, is not arguing like a *Protestant*. Nay farther: he shews his high displeasure against me, pag. 36. for not owning, *that there is some other christian baptism besides that of the adult and by plunging*; though he knows, that my differing from him in these two points is the occasion of the whole controverſie between us. That is to say: he is displeased, that I will not at once give up the settled sentiments of my mind with regard to the whole controverſie, even though I still believe that I am in the right and he in the wrong. Instead of answering such an *unreasonable* demand, I say, in behalf of my self and those of the same sentiments with me: that if after the best search we are able to make, we *verily believe* we are in the *right*; we must *as verily* believe that our brethren on the other side are *mistaken*. And this is all that I pretend to: having never once charged them with want of *integrity*, though I believe them all to be in a mistake, and have a right to own my differing from them. Let Mr. *Fleming*, if he can, give a better reason for his daring to dissent from the establish'd church, in which are such numbers of men, both of *capacity* and *integrity*; both of which are *impeached* by him, if his argument stands good against me.

I do not see, that any one thing I have said *impeaches the integrity* of those from whom I differ; nor did I ever design that

that it should. I shew indeed, that I believe them to be *in a mistake*. And if wherein we differ I do upon sincere enquiry believe that I am in the right; then I am obliged in conscience to believe that they are in the wrong: nay I cannot in that case believe otherwise if I would, whatever is the inference with regard to *the capacity* of my brethren. I say still, as I did in the passage quoted from me by Mr. *Fleming*; that ‘he and his brethren must answer for themselves ‘in administering what they call baptism to infants, and ‘admitting them as visible members of the church.’ And yet he wrongs me very much, by representing as if I disowned from being *visible members of Christ’s church* all those who are unbaptized. I never once disowned them. I believe them to be members of the christian church, though under a great mistake, and by the influence of that mistake destitute of one of the ordinances, which I believe Christ appointed to be complied with by all the subjects of his kingdom. They believe themselves baptized: I do not. They believe themselves *regularly* entred into Christ’s church: I believe they are come in *irregularly*: but yet, by reason of the profession they make, though in a different way from what I believe Christ appointed, I cannot, nor ever did, disown them from being members of his church. And in pursuance of these thoughts I say still, as I said before, pag. 6th of this treatise; that I had rather persuade my unbaptized brethren to communicate with such societies as believe them baptized, than run the risque of breaking to pieces those societies, where the greatest part believe immersion in water on profession of faith to be necessary to the constitution of a christian church; or contribute to the intire loss of the practice of christian baptism, which mixt communion, in this great city, would effectually do.

I still persist in the same opinion of *the importance* of baptism, which I have declared in my *Discourses* and their *Defence*. And I now add: that it is one thing, for christians to differ in their sentiments about a point of meer speculation; and another thing, to differ upon a point of practice, where the continuance or non-continuance of an ordinance of Christ is concerned. I lay it down still as my judgment, (and I never pretended to go further) that according to the tenor of the New Testament, the profession which should give

40 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

give a right to baptism must be a *personal* 'profession: and
' that baptism was designed to be the token of a *personal*,
' *voluntary* submission to Christ: that to this agrees *the plain-*
' *est sense* of the *commission* it self; of *the examples* of bap-
' *tism*; and of *the reasonings* upon it: and that there is no
' room for *conjectural inferences* from the constitution of the
' *Mosaic Law*, or from the *Abrahamic covenant* which
' *went before it.*' All this I still deliver as my judgment,
and the foundation of my practice: but am far from build-
ing upon these principles the superstructure, which my op-
ponent falsely ascribes to me. All that I have said in my
Discourses or their *Defence* is, I think, very consistent with
believing, that a man may be a real christian, who through
the prejudices of education is trained up in such mistakes, as
have prevented him from being baptized. I declare, that
I heartily believe this: and am sorry to see, that the intro-
ducing of infants-baptism into the church, (which however
history shews us was not done all at once, but step by step,
as other errors were introduced) has prevented thousands of
as good christians as any in the world from making their
profession of christianity in the way which Christ ap-
pointed.

Let the reader judge, whether the inference, which Mr.
Fl. unjustly raises against me, does not fix that very charge
upon him, which he would fain fasten upon me. For I
believe, that a man may be a professed christian and a true
christian, a member of *the invisible church*, and of *the visible*
church too, who yet remains under such mistakes, as have
hitherto prevented him from being baptized at all, though
he thinks he is baptized. But Mr. *Fleming*, if I do not greatly
mistake his meaning in this 36th page of his *Vindication*, be-
lieves, that none but they who are baptized *belong to Christ's*
visible church. I believe concerning the unbaptized christians,
that they have entred the church *in an irregular manner*, be-
cause they have not made their profession of christianity in
the way which Christ appointed for that purpose. However,
as they have made their profession, they are *visible members*:
and such of them as have made this profession in the sin-
cerity of their hearts, and adhered to it in the course of
their lives, are *real members of the church of Christ*.

Which

I. relating to positive Institutions. 41

Which now of us two is the most chargeable with * *narrowing the church of Christ*? Whose scheme is the most *contracting*, or least favoured by *the genius and spirit of christianity*? And how will the differing sentiments of christians concerning *the regular constitution* of christian assemblies, or the desire to preserve an ordinance of Christ, by keeping up distinct societies of those who unquestionably are baptized, prove the charge of *uncharitableness* and *bigotry* against these societies; when notwithstanding this distinction they love and treat their differing brethren as fellow christians? This is the case with the antipædobaptists of my acquaintance. But Mr. Fl. it should seem, has met with some hot people of that denomination, who are not so wise: and hereupon he is so wise, as to bring the charge of *bigotry* and *uncharitableness* upon *the whole body*, as I have plainly proved he does. I wish he would consider, that *the spirit and genius of christianity* are not kept up merely by professed christians worshipping and communicating in the same particular assemblies; but by *maintaining* in their temper and conversation *the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*. And this I am persuaded is effectually done by many thousands in the differing denominations, notwithstanding the distinct constitution of their societies; while heart burnings reign too much in societies agreed as to the ordinance of baptism, among the very members which communicate at the same table. I could be glad to see, that we had fewer differences among us. But while we do differ in sentiment, I am very sure, that the charging with *bigotry* and *uncharitableness* all those who in their conscience believe immersion in water on profession of faith to be the only baptism instituted by Christ, is not the way, either to restore, or to keep up, the true *spirit and genius of christianity*.

And hereupon I would ask even Mr. Fleming himself; whether he has not, in one single sentence, and in his application of it to the whole body of Antipædobaptists, all of whom believe *plunging essential to baptism*, acted more uncharitably towards them, than they have ever acted towards their brethren the pædobaptists. It is in the tract intituled,

G

Plunging

* See Mr. Fleming's reflexions, at the bottom of his 36th page; with his great grief for our destroying that *charity*, which is so much wanting in himself.

42 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

Plunging a subject of bigotry, when made essential to baptism; which tract Mr. Fleming now publicly acknowledges to be his own. The sentence is as follows, in pag. 34. 'But who ever in either case, [that is, either in *plunging* or *pouring*, as appears from 3 lines preceding] 'is so bigoted, as to make his *mode* essential, has thereby deviated from the gospel rule; has brought in *offences*; has introduced *uncharitableness*; and lies exposed hereupon to a terrible *anathema*! for as much as he cannot be a true christian, who saps and destroys the Spirit of the religion of Jesus, which is *charity*.' Whatever artful turn is given in the words immediately following, with regard to *truth* and *piety*; tis plain, that the application of the damnatory sentence is presently made, pag. 35. against all those, *who think plunging requisite or essential to baptism*. The *ergo*, with which the book concludes presently after, is turned directly upon them, though with a blank dash; — which shews, that he accounts them the very people described in his 34th page, though *he himself* has not front enough to write down the conclusion in words at length. To all this I shall make no other answer, than that I pray God to forgive him and turn his heart.

But to return to the *Vindication*. For answer to pag. 37. it is sufficient to say: that I think my *Discourses* and *Defence* have proved baptism to be the ordinance, whereby Christ would have his disciples *profess* their *faith* in him, and their *hopes* and *expectations* from him: and that this profession is very properly *renewed* at the Lord's table, and was by the institutor himself so designed. Arguments to disprove what I had advanced might have deserved consideration: but *opinions*, and *hypotheses*, unsupported with proofs, deserve none.

In pag. 38. the *Vindicator* calls to mind his own neglect of 'what I had made the substance of the greatest part of my *Discourse*, and upon which I had laid *the greatest stress* for finding out the mind of Christ in the affair before us.' To make satisfaction for which neglect he saith: 'he cannot at present but be of opinion, that the term *repentance*, when first applied to baptism, had this idea essential to it; *viz.* mens *change of mind*, or their *renouncing* the religions they had before professed, either of *Gentilism* or *Judaism*.'

But this *renouncing of religions before professed* will by no means

I. relating to positive Institutions. 43

means account for either John's baptism being called *the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins*, Mar. i. 4. or for Peter's exhortation, Acts ii. 38. *Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins*; or Christ's own declaration of the design of his coming, which was, *to call sinners to repentance*, Mat. ix. 13. or the numerous passages in Paul's epistles, which affirm; *that the Scripture hath concluded all under sin*; and that *all who are justified must be justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ*, Gal. iii. 22. Rom. iii. 23, 24. Answering to Mark's description of John's baptism as *the baptism of repentance*, is Matthew's account, of all the people's *confessing their sins* at baptism, ch. iii. 6. and the warning given by John to the Pharisees, when they offered themselves to baptism, ver. 8. *to bring forth fruits meet for repentance*. These things are very * different from the meer renouncing of the former profession of Judaism: and yet this is the very *first application* of the term *repentance to baptism*.

But our chief business is with the baptism instituted by Christ. Now I have already shewn, which my opposer should have disproved if he could; that this baptism does, in every subject of it, according to the accounts which the New Testament gives of its nature and design, plainly denote the profession of such a faith in Christ, as includes *repentance and the hope of pardon*. And I hope Mr. Fleming will acknowledge, that they who are the farthest from a vicious character do yet stand in need of that *repentance* which the gospel requires, and of that *pardon*, which it graciously offers. What egregious trifling is it therefore, to talk of *the guileless Nathanael, the devout Cornelius*, and such other pious persons as *Lydia, the eunuch, and Crispus*; as if in the affair of baptism they had nothing to do with *repentance*, properly speaking? This is the purport of the argument, if there is any force at all in it. He thinks indeed to come off very safe, by the help of the Word *chiefly*; concluding

G 2

thus

* Nay, can Mr. Fleming shew; that by being baptized into the belief of *the approach of the kingdom of heaven*, the people had any thoughts of their renouncing Judaism at all? To me it is not probable that they had. On the contrary to me it is plain; that they expected to *continue in the Jewish religion*; disciples of *Moses*; and under that, as the most honourable distinction, to be made masters of the world, by the establishment of that *kingdom*, the *approach* whereof John preached. Very good!

44 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

thus his paragraph. 'To suppose baptism to have been *the baptism of repentance* to such pious persons, must *CHIEFLY* intend their *renouncing Judaism*, or import the *change of their religion.*' Upon which I would ask him; whether it includes *any regard at all* to repentance for sin, properly speaking, and any hope in the mercy of God through Jesus as a Saviour? If it does: then this is *the chief* or *principal* thing; in comparison of which the circumstance of *leaving another religion formerly professed* scarce deserves to be named.

As to our Lord's baptism, which Mr. Fl. mentions, pag. 39: my first *Discourse*, (pag. 3, 11, 12.) accounts for that in such a manner, as is clearly consistent with his own character, and with John's divine commission to baptize into the profession of believing *the approach of the kingdom of heaven*, and of a resolution to live agreeably to it. This suited the character of Jesus, which was then altogether private. He was not baptized as the introducer of a new dispensation, which was to *abrogate the Jewish*: but as one in a private character, who expected that new dispensation, and believed its *approach*; and therefore came within the reach of the divine commission which John had received to baptize such persons.

In the same 39th page the *Vindicator* seems somewhat puzzled to find out 'how baptism can properly be applied to the infants of professing christians, when they can neither be said to *repent* as expressing *a change of their religion*, nor *repent* of any course of action.' His manner of solving the difficulty is as follows. 'Infants therefore appear to me the proper subjects of this *baptism of repentance*, as they are initiated by it into a constitution of *pardon and life.*'

I desire the reader here to observe the consistency of this gentleman; and how far he will strain a point, to serve an hypothesis. He acknowledges in this same paragraph, that infants *cannot be said to repent*, particularly not to *repent of any course of action*. Yet he will have them to be *the proper subjects of the baptism of repentance*, initiated by it into a constitution of *pardon and life*. See here, *pardon* without *repentance*: nay and *life* too: and all by the application of a rite, which the infants themselves know nothing of! And farther, in the following words this application is made of

so much importance, as if there were for the poor infants, even of professing christians themselves, no hope of *life* without it ! Tis *cruelty*, it seems, to deny baptism to the infants of professing christians. And the reason given for it, in this and the following page is ; ‘ because infants are certainly subjected to *death*, in consequence of *the one offence*.’ The author adds further : ‘ But as baptism is the *initiating rite* into a constitution which declares, *that as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive* ; this rite applied to infants becomes a proper, significant seal or token of REMISSION, not of *sin*, or *personal demerit*, but of *death*, or of their deliverance from under the dominion of it. So that the application of it may minister comfort to parents, whose offspring die in infancy : and should teach them *not to sorrow* as those who are *without hope*.’ To the same purpose he speaks, pag. 43. ‘ Especially, as they and their parents are equally subjected to *an universal evil*, without their own *consent* or *choice*, viz. *death* : They must therefore have an *equal* need of the same *remedy* : and of consequence, as baptism did initiate the first christians into this *scheme of life* ; their *infants*, by the most obvious reason, should be so initiated. And till *death* does exempt the *infants* of christians from its stroke, their claim to this *seal of the covenant of life* must illude the force of all objection.’

The reader will here observe, that all this superstructure is built by Mr. F. upon his *doctrine of the seals* ; which I have shewn to be without foundation. But the reason of my bringing these things together in one view is, that it may be seen the more clearly, upon what principle he makes it *cruelty* to deny baptism to the infants of professing christians, and makes the application of that rite the initiating of them into a constitution of *pardon* and *life*. So far as I am able to see, it is a principle which aims to prove ; that the baptism of these infants of professing *christians* is their security against annihilation. However it is made the very thing which *seals to them their deliverance from the dominion of death* : to which *dominion* they must, according to the author’s way of arguing, be for ever exposed, if not baptized ; or at least their parents can have no *comfortable hope* of their deliverance. Nay it is mentioned expressly as *their remedy*

46 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, 1.*

medy against death, that universal evil. And as for the infants of those who are *not professed christians*; there is *cruelty* enough in this scheme: for according to it there is no hope at all left for them (or for their parents either) that they shall ever rise from under death's dominion. They are all left under the comfortless prospect of perishing for ever: and this, notwithstanding the plain words of the text; which the author most unaccountably quotes as if it was on his side; *that as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.* He * will not allow Dr. Gale's conclusion to be good: who argues, that *if children are not baptized for actual nor original sin, they are not to be baptized at all.* There is according to Mr. Fleming, something else for which they should be baptized: and that, by the whole tenor of his argument appears to be, the securing of *life* to them, and preventing them from falling for ever *under the dominion of death.*

But methinks he should have established this strange doctrine upon clearer proofs, before he ventured to argue upon its importance. As the argument stands at present in his own words, it is more calculated to terrifie tender parents into the necessity of bringing their children to baptism, than a proof that it is the mind of Christ they should be baptized. Though the danger represented in case of a neglect is not the very same; yet our author's argument is too near of kin to that, which has made many fearful parents carry their children to be sprinkled almost as soon as they were born; lest they should die and be damn'd without it.

And how greatly does he abound with contradictions, in endeavoring to support his scheme! Baptism is in Scripture called *the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins*: and men are called upon, *to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.* These things are so plain; that even with regard to infants themselves Mr. Fleming calls christian baptism *the baptism of repentance*, and this with a view to *pardon.* But he will have this *pardon* to be a *remission*, not of *sin*, but of *death*; and conveyed by the application of a rite to subjects which he acknowledges do not *repent* at all! And whereas he quotes Scripture to prove, that *as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive*; to

serve

serve the turn of his hypothesis, he confines the *all* here mentioned, to baptized christians, and such of their offspring, and such only, as die baptized! How much better would it be, to use *the baptism of repentance* as *the baptism of repentance*; applying it to those only, who profess that *repentance* which all stand in need of; and acknowledging, that all those who with truly penitent minds submit to this ordinance do certainly receive the remission of all past sins?

The 41st and 42d pages of the *Vindication*, from the old topic of groundless allusions to former dispensations, are spent in the enquiry, *whether, [taking in all circumstances] an express prohibition was not necessary to warrant us in denying baptism to infants.* Which enquiry, even taking in all the circumstances that any way belong to it, is so far from being *the foundation, on which the weight of the debate rests*, that it is quite frivolous: because whatever was by the command of God done to *infants*, under *former dispensations*, nothing can give them a right to baptism under the dispensation of the gospel, but the command of him, who by authority from God did under the gospel dispensation institute that ordinance. And since he has not only made no mention of infants with relation to baptism, but has given such an account of the ordinance itself, partly in his own words, and partly in the words of his inspired followers, as amounts to a prohibition of baptizing them; it is trifling to say, that an express prohibition was necessary.

Christ gave such an account in his own words, as excludes them: particularly in the very institution of the ordinance itself, MAT. XXVIII. 19. For besides that *baptizing * into the*

* If it be here objected, from 1 COR. x. 2. that *the fathers were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea*, and that their children were *with them*: I answer, that though the children were with their parents *in the cloud and in the sea*, yet according to the manifest meaning of the apostle in this place, the children were not *baptized into Moses*, as their parents were. For, in allusion to that *profession* of believing in Jesus Christ, which his disciples make by *being baptized into his name*, the apostle in this text signifies; that *the fathers* of old, (allusively speaking) did by their following Moses under the cloud, and through the Red sea, *profess* their belief of the divine authority of that doctrine which Moses taught. This is plainly the apostles meaning, as appears by his reasoning in the following verses: the sum of which is to this purpose; that though hereby *the fathers* spoken of did *profess* to be Moses his disciples, yet many of them did not act agreeably

48 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

the name of the Father and the Son and the holy ghost properly signifies baptizing into the profession of that doctrine, which is the mind of *the Father*, published by *the Son*, and confirmed by the mighty operations of *the holy Ghost*; Christ's ministers are here commissioned to baptize no other persons in all nations, or in any nation, than such as are by *teaching made disciples*. The commission is as extensive to *teach*, as to *baptize*. *Teach all nations: baptize all nations.* 'Those two words, *teach* and *baptize*,' as Dr. Gale very justly observes, (*Reflec. on Wall.* pag. 249.) 'relate to all the same persons, and to whatever is meant in the commission by *all nations*'. If therefore *infants* are here ordered to be *baptized*; then *infants* are here ordered to be *taught*. If Christ does not here command his ministers to *teach* infants while they are *infants*; then he does not command them to *baptize* infants while they remain *infants*. If they are not to be *taught*, till they are capable and willing to receive that *instruction* which should make them *disciples*: then they are, according to this very commission, not to be *baptized*, till they have willingly received that *instruction*, by the embracing whereof they become *disciples*. Thus infants are excluded from baptism by the words of Christ himself.

And the reasonings of his followers in the primitive age, who well understood his mind, make it still plainer, that the ordinance of baptism was not by him designed for them. Witness the apostle Peter's requiring in baptism *the answer of a good conscience towards God*, as the very thing that renders it *salutary*; 1 Pet. III. 21. Witness St. Paul's arguing with the Galatians, ch. III. 27. that *as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*; that is, have by their own act and deed shewn themselves to be his disciples. Witness his appeal to the Romans, ch. VI. 4. concerning the obligation which *all christians* take upon themselves by *being baptized into Jesus Christ*; an obligation, which no infant can take upon himself, and which the act of another cannot bind upon him: *Therefore we*, (that is, all who are baptized into Jesus Christ, as mentioned in the preceding

agreeably to their *profession*, and therefore God's displeasure broke out against them. This passage therefore, so often harped upon by Mr. Fleming, is directly against him, instead of serving the cause of infant-baptism.

preceding verse ; therefore we) are buried with him by baptism into death ; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. And to go no further ; witness those remarkable words of Philip to the eunuch, who asked him *what hindered him to be baptized*, Acts viii. 37. *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest* : plainly signifying, that *belief* is the thing, which according to Christ's constitution gives right to baptism ; of which *belief* we think infants incapable. It is therefore nothing to the affair in hand, * how infants were treated under the *patriarchal* and *Mosaic* dispensations, for reasons peculiar to those dispensations. It is nothing to the purpose how our Lord personally treated those infants, which were brought to him for purposes quite different from baptism. And notwithstanding the fitness of recommending to his disciples Mat. xviii. 3, 4. the humility and readiness to receive instruction which are visible in children ; our Lord's not baptizing or ordering to be baptized those who were brought to him, chap. xix. 13. but only, according to the desire of those that brought them, *putting his hands on them and praying*, fully satisfy me, that he did not think them capable of what is required in baptism. Nor finally, can any *holiness*, considered in opposition to *uncleanness*, and derived to children by the lawful marriage of their parents, give the children a right to a positive ordinance, the very institution whereof is contrived in such a manner as to exclude them.

In pag. 42. the *Vindicator* puts a question, which he is by no means able to answer, though he vainly attempts it. The question is this. *Since God had so expressly enjoined circumcision to Abrahams infant posterity*, [he should have said, *to the males of Abraham's infant posterity*, for the females were all excluded] *why was not Christ as express in his injunction of baptism to the infant posterity of christian converts* ? The true answer is ; because Christ did not see fit to do it : and this is reason sufficient. We are fully satisfied he would have done it, if he had seen good reason for it. And we are farther satisfied, from the account which himself and his apostles have given of this institution, compared with the circumstances in which circumcision was ordained under

H

former

* See *Vindic.* pag. 41. at the bottom.

50 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

former dispensations; that Christ saw it *unfit* to appoint infants to be the subjects of the ordinance whereby he would be acknowledged by his disciples as the Messiah promised in those former dispensations. And we acknowledge the wisdom of the author of our religion, in ordering it so, that whereas not only adult persons but infants were made partakers of an ordinance, belonging to dispensations wherein the Messiah was held forth only *in promise*; none but those who are able to judge and act for themselves are admitted to be partakers of that ordinance, which is appointed to be the token of acknowledging and obeying the Messiah *already come*.

It is trifling therefore, in a case of this nature, to talk of *resumptions of grants*, and to quote hereupon the opinions of lawyers. It is more trifling, to talk of * *choosing guardians for children*, unless it can be proved, that the gospel allows and directs to *guardianship* in the case before us. But most of all trifling it is to suppose; that *the solemn dedication* of infants unto God, in pursuance of this *guardianship*, should be their protection, in respect of that *universal evil, death*, to which (our author learnedly † observes) they and their parents are *equally* subjected, without their own *consent* or *choice*. To talk of baptism as *a remedy*, in a case of this nature; to make this *the seal of the covenant of life*; and to pretend a need, or necessity of it, till *death* exempts *the infants of christians* from its stroke; is talking quite at randome, and keeping at the utmost distance from Scripture doctrine. There is therefore nothing like the same ground for *admitting infants to baptism*, as there is for *administring the Lord's supper to females*: who upon their solemn profession of the christian faith at their baptism, are *disciples* of Christ, as properly as the males; and therefore as truly the very persons, to whom Christ in his commission ordered baptism to be administered.

The arguing, pag. 43, 44. from the comparison between *circumcision* and *baptism*, with regard to the *pain* endured in *circumcision*, and the feeling of no pain in *perfusion* or *sprinkling* is meer begging the question; because we deny *perfusion* or *sprinkling* to be *baptism*. And as for *the origine of moral entities*, and the enquiries from *Puffendorff*, how long before

* *Vindic.* pag. 43.

† *Ibid.*

before a child is born he is capable of a title to a certain right; Mr. Fl. might as well have kept these niceties to himself, as troubled the reader with them. For they can be nothing to the purpose, in a case where infants are excluded, by being incapable, according to those very records which alone could give a right.

The arguing from *infant-baptism* to *moral duties and obligations*, as our author does, pag. 45, 46. is again begging the question; and at the same time leading the reader into such a maze, as only confirms the truth of what I observe in my *Discourses* with which he is so angry; that positive institutions must receive their whole force, not from our reasonings, but from the declared will of the lawgiver, considering who that lawgiver is.

However, Mr. Fleming is resolved he will have an *argument from deduction*: and he sets it down pompously in pag. 46, 47, 48, in a distinct column, opposite to that wherein he frames for us our argument against infant baptism. But he manages his *argument* very weakly, to say no worse of it.

For 1. We do not lay so much stress on the *silence* of Scripture relating to *infants-baptism*, (though that ought to have its weight,) as upon the Scripture's giving such an account of baptism, as shews that Christ never designed infants to be the subjects of it.

Then 2. Whereas he affirms, *that households are mentioned as baptized in virtue of the faith of their heads*: I affirm this to be absolutely false; and again desire him to bring one proof of it; having shewn, over and over, that *the households*, where any distinct account is given concerning them, are mentioned as baptized, only upon their own *bearing and believing*, and not one mentioned as *baptized in virtue of the faith of its head*.

Infants, he says, *had ever been received into the covenant with their parents, since Abraham*. If he means, that they were received so in *the gospel covenant*, properly speaking; tis only begging the question. And whereas he adds: *the gospel covenant and the Abrahamic are the same*: I have shewn, pag. 30, 31, 32, that they are *not the same*. And Mr. Fleming himself, as I have there observed, notwithstanding his quibbles in other places, acknowledges, in pag. 28. of this very

52 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

Vindication, that they are not the same. For he speaks of *the Abrahamic covenant as the old covenant which had had its accomplishment*, and of *the gospel as the new covenant*. And at the top of pag. 29. he expressly speaks of *the covenant of peculiarity* and *the Gospel-covenant* as two distinct covenants. And indeed well he might: for *the gospel covenant* is no covenant of peculiarity, as *the Abrahamic was*; but is offered to *all in every nation*, who will consent to become members of it.

Infants being concerned in the death of Jesus, personally owned and blessed by him, and his declaring that of such (with respect to *humility* and *purity*) is *the Kingdom of heaven*; all these, and a thousand more things of this kind, will never prove, that it was his will they should have an ordinance administered to them, of which, according to his own and his apostles description they are incapable. And since these descriptions are plain and clear, *the precepts and examples* relating to baptism are conclusive on our side, *for training up children* to a fitness for the ordinance.

3. *Faith* and *repentance* are still requisite qualifications for baptism: nor can *baptism be applied to infants on the faith of their parents*, unless Christ the lawgiver under the gospel dispensation has declared he would have it so; which we verily believe he has not.

4. In Jesus himself *faith and repentance were not prerequisites*. Yet Jesus did with great propriety submit to be baptized, in obedience to the divine authority of John's commission, to baptize into the belief *that the kingdom of heaven was at hand*. But the baptism ordained by Jesus himself was quite another thing, though built upon the same divine authority; requiring a profession of the belief, *that the kingdom of heaven is already come, that Jesus is the prince of that kingdom, and that to him our obedience is therefore due*.

5. However *proper and natural parts of all nations children are*; yet Christ's commission no more directs or authorizes the baptizing them, than the baptizing any other *parts of all nations*, who are *incapable of faith*, or who willfully *reject or despise it*,

6. We cannot see one *inference or deduction* in favour of *infant baptism*, but what to us appears strained and unnatural; the *deductions and inferences* being in our judgment
clear

clear on the other side. *The voice of reason and the law of nature* require us to obey the mind of God, when made known to us.

7. Baptism is no *seal of the covenant*; as I have largely shewn. Circumcision it self never was a *seal*; either to infants, or to their parents, even under the *Abrahamic* and *Mosaic* dispensations; or ever to any other person in the world, except only *Abraham* himself; to whom it was a *seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was yet uncircumcised*. ROM. IV. 11. The arguing therefore in this case from GAL. III. 17. serves no other purpose than raising a dust, to blind the reader's eyes.

8. Infants being according to Scripture account incapable of baptism, and therefore not required to be baptized; there is, from the perfect wisdom, righteousness and goodness of the supreme governour, as fair a prospect of a future life of happiness to them without baptism, as with it. They are safe, in the hands of him who cannot err or be injurious in judgement: and we should be liable to his just displeasure, if we should administer the ordinance of baptism to them, when we believe it is his mind, that they should not be baptized till they make it their own act. And as to *the scheme of life*, and its connexion with *baptism*; we can never believe, that God has put it in the power of parents, by their *neglect* of applying an external rite to their children, to expose them to *annihilation*; or by the *application* of it to secure *life* to them in a future state.

Thus I have followed my author, step by step, in his *Argument*: and cannot find any strength in what he advances. Notwithstanding all that he has here or any where else said; the commission to *baptize* such as are *made disciples*, Mat. xxviii. 19. without the least allowance of baptizing any other; the promise of *salvation*, Mar. xvi. 16. to such as *believe, and are baptized*, upon having *the gospel preached to them*, as mentioned in the preceding verse; the obligation and encouragement to baptism, arising from a conviction of the divine authority of Christ's religion, Acts xxii. 16. the consideration of baptism as *the answer of a good conscience towards God*; 1 Pet. iii. 21. the declaration, Gal. iii. 27. that *as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*; and this in pursuance of
becoming

54 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

becoming the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, ver. 26. the appeal to the Roman christians, Rom. vi. 3. 4. concerning *the known end and intention of baptism*, considered as *a burial and a resurrection*; and concerning the sense which the baptized person professes to have, of his obligation *to die unto sin, and to walk in newness of life*: these and the like things, which we find in the New Testament, are of more force with us, to insist upon a *believer's* obligation to *baptism*, and to make us confine that ordinance to *believers* only; than all Mr. *Fleming's* arguments are, either to make us think meanly of the obligation, or to persuade us that infants have any thing to do with that ordinance.

What follows in Mr. *Fleming's* first Section, after his *Argument*, as he calls it, is in a great measure repetition of what had been said before, intermixed with personal reflexions and contentions about words. However some particulars shall be taken notice of.

Upon my declaring, that 'great catholicism may be consistent with denying that any other are visible members of Christ's church, than those who make profession of their own faith,' he observes, pag. 49. that 'this kind of catholicism will agree with that of those churches, who deny any to be christians, or in a salvable state, but such as are within their own pale.' In answer to which I say: There are no such churches among us, that I know of: and either he is very ill informed, or else he acts a very unchristian part, in thus misrepresenting and abusing us. Even the comparing, at a venture, our churches with the church of Rome, in denying any to be christians or in a salvable state, but such as are within their own pale, is in my judgment so very uncatholic and uncharitable; that I wish he may see and repent of the evil of it.

Concerning pag. 50, 51, 52. I observe; that the author runs on with assertions and harangues of his own, without so much as pretending to answer what I had said on the other side, which it was his business to do, since he was resolved to write against me: at which rate there is no prospect of ever seeing an end of the controversy. Particularly he asserts, pag. 51. lin. 32, 33. but gives no proof of it, 'that baptism is ONLY a rite of separation or distinction:' whereas

I. relating to positive Institutions. 55

whereas I have all along insisted on its being *the token of a personal profession of being Christ's disciple*. This we account to be of great importance : and as I had laid great stress upon it, he ought to have disproved me if he could.

To the main drift of the argument in these pages, the *analogy* between *baptism* and *circumcision*, and the one *succeeding* the other, my answer is : that there is no such *analogy* between the two ordinances, as can prove, that Christ our lawgiver would have the practice of the Jews relating to circumcision, to be a rule to christians relating to baptism. And yet any *analogy* short of this will not help the cause of infant baptism : and if you make the analogy full and exact ; even that fulness it self will prove too much, and thereby ruin the whole cause.

If the lawgiver has declared, that *baptism* was designed by him *to succeed circumcision*, so as to answer just the same purposes : then we ought to administer it to the same subjects, to all the same subjects, and to no other : and so far as the difference of the ceremony it self will permit, we must religiously adhere to the manner of administering *the abrogated ordinance*, not leaving out the least circumstance, unless where the legislator has given the particular exceptions. If we have not a strict regard to this ; with the same reason as we administer *baptism* instead of *circumcision*, and to the same subjects, we may either introduce the [abrogated] *Jewish purifications*, or something else, which we, of our own heads, think has a *decent* likeness or *analogy* to them. And it will be impossible for us to know where to stop, if we will not be confined to the directions of our lawgiver. I am very well satisfied it is the want of this, which has introduced so much confusion into the minds of christians, about the constitution of a gospel church, and the regulation of its worship.

But whatever *likeness* there may be between *baptism* and *circumcision* in some particulars ; yet there is a very wide difference in others. For circumcision was appointed to be *the sign or token of the promise* to one particular nation, that the Messiah should come, and should arise from among them : baptism is an *acknowledgment that he is come*, and a *token of voluntary subjection to him* in all the laws of his spiritual government,

56 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

government, by persons of any nation in the world. Circumcision was, by the command of God, administred *only to the males of that one nation*, and *suitd only to males*: whereas we have plain examples in the New Testament, of baptizing *both males and females*, both among *Jews and gentiles*; and *the declared design of the ordinance* is fitted for *the one* as well as *the other*, both being *one in Christ*. Again, circumcision was expressly ordered to be administred to *infants* of eight days old, who could not *understand the design of it*, nor was it necessary they should: whereas *repentance and faith* are required of those who would be baptized; nor without *the profession* hereof can they answer *the declared design of the ordinance*, which is, to put them in mind of their obligation *to die unto sin, and to walk in newness of life*. Circumcision was upon many accounts better suited to the case of infants than adult persons, though it was necessary that it should begin with the adult, and by them, from age to age was to be administred to infants. Baptism is so described by Christ himself, *the only lawgiver* under the gospel dispensation, and by his inspired followers commissioned by him, as to shew that it was never his intention it should be administred to infants, or to any other than those who voluntarily profess their faith in him and their resolution to obey him. Accordingly there is neither any *precept* to baptize infants, nor one instance throughout the whole New Testament, of an infant baptized. For the commission *to baptize all nations* extends to no more, *in all the nations*, than those who by *teaching* are become *disciples*: and whereas *households* are said to have been *baptized*; it is said concerning the same households, that *they believed*. Circumcision was to Abraham, to whom the institution was first given, and to him alone, *a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while yet uncircumcised*: to all others it was only *a token* of good things promised and to come; an outward, visible mark in the flesh, betokening this promise; and this in some cases, where the subject it self was not capable of making the reflexion. Baptism, though leaving no mark in the flesh, is to every one who submits to it a sufficient token of his own voluntary engagement *to die unto sin, and live unto God*. Circumcision received its force of obligation from the acknowledged

acknowledged authority of a wise and righteous and gracious governour, under *former dispensations* which are now *superseded*. Baptism receives its force, not from the *abrogated* dispensation of Moses, nor from the *original institution of circumcision* to Abraham; but from the acknowledged authority of the same wise and righteous and gracious governour, delegated to his Son, constituting him *sole lawgiver of the kingdom of heaven*. And accordingly, as circumcision was, under the former dispensations, to be administered to such only, as the precept commanded to be circumcised; so baptism, under the dispensation of the gospel, ought to be administered to no other, than the Son of God directed to be baptized.

It is plain therefore, that besides other material circumstances wherein circumcision and baptism differ, they were *ordained for very different purposes*. Consequently there is nothing in the argument drawn from *the analogy* between *baptism* and *circumcision*, that can bind our consciences, or affect our practice in the christian church. Reasonings and inferences of our own, from one rite under one dispensation to another rite under another, can lay no obligation upon us. And yet this is all that can be had, in the popular argument from *analogy*. 'Tis the command of the lawgiver, in every dispensation, considering who that lawgiver is, which must direct our conduct with regard to the rites ordained in each dispensation; as being suited to each by his own supreme wisdom. If we pretend to vary from this; instead of *obeying God's command*, we make our selves the lawgivers, and leave him out of the question.

As to the doctrine of *impartments made in baptism*; if I have misunderstood my author, as in pag. 54. of his *Vindication* he suggests I have; his own words, concerning the interests of children during former dispensations, and their ancient privileges, led me into the mistake. Which yet will be of no advantage to him, till he disproves what I have advanced, concerning *a personal profession*, required in every subject of baptism.

And I desire to know of him, how the *female* Jews were *assured* of their being parties in the same covenant as the *males*; if circumcision was really *the seal of the covenant*; since only the males had that *seal* applied to them. If cir-
cumcision

58 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

cumcision was the very *seal of the covenant*; whatever that *covenant* was, whether *the covenant of grace* or not; then all the particulars mentioned by Mr. *Fleming* in his 55th page could never *assure the females*, that they were *parties* in it.

I consider *profelytes* to the Jewish religion upon the same foot as native Jews; and the children of these *profelytes* upon the same foot as the children of the native Jews. But that will not help my antagonist in this controversy: because native Jews and *profelytes* together make up only that one body of people, which were distinguished from the rest of the world by the covenant made with *Abraham*: which covenant, I have proved, and Mr. *Fleming* has acknowledged, is as distinct from *the gospel covenant*, as old is from *new*. Therefore what he says concerning *profelytes*, in pag. 55, 56. is nothing to the purpose.

The greatest part of what is advanced, from pag. 57. to the end of the first Section, is one continued distortion of my words, interlarded with harangues about baptism as *the seal of the covenant* and *a rite of separation*; all which harangues I have answered already. To set my reader right, as to *the fulfilling of righteousness*, in a voluntary submission to the ordinance of baptism; particularly as to what regards our Lord's own baptism, wherein I observe that *he fulfilled righteousness* by making the act his own, whereas otherwise *he himself* had fulfilled no *righteousness* at all: I desire the reader to consult my own words, in the 13th, 14th, and 19th pages of my *Two Discourses*, and in pag. 66, 67. of my *Defence*. In which last passage I openly acknowledge, that *righteousness was fulfilled* in the circumcision of our Saviour, even the very same *righteousness*, which *he himself* afterwards fulfilled, in his *voluntary* submission to baptism. But then I observe, that in his circumcision *the righteousness* was not fulfilled *by himself*, but by those who took care to have him circumcised. And the want of attending to this distinction, or rather the passing it over as if it had never been mentioned, looks like a design to evade. Mr. *F's* book is full of things of this nature. Christ's *consent* to be baptized was the very thing, the only thing, that made it *righteousness* in *him*: the want of this in infant baptism plainly proves, that therein *the infant himself fulfils no righteousness*: and yet if they who administer the ceremony to infants had a divine warrant for it, *they would* therein

therein fulfil *righteousness*: but if they have no such warrant; then there is *no righteousness fulfilled* in the whole affair. This is the manifest train of my reasoning: which my opposer has very much misrepresented.

Righteousness cannot in any respect *be fulfilled* by a rite's being applied to a * *meer patient*, unless the *command* of the divine lawgiver directs the application of it to a *meer patient*. But that this has been done under the gospel dispensation with regard to baptism, we deny. If therefore I have insisted ever so much upon positive institutions being founded merely on *the divine command*, † considering who the lawgiver is; (and this Mr. *Fleming* knows is my *limitation*, though he will not take notice of it) yet since I insist at the same time, that there is no command, no divine authority, for administering baptism to such *meer patients* as infants are; I am thoroughly consistent. We say: that the word of God does indeed require those to whom the gospel is preached, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be baptized on profession of that belief: but we say at the same time, that it gives such an account of baptism, as excludes from it all who do not voluntarily make this profession. This we are satisfied is the state of the case, as it stands in the New Testament. And till Mr. *Fl.* can prove the contrary; particularly till he can prove, that the word of God does authorize the administering baptism to infants; all his reasonings about the possibility of *fulfilling righteousness* by applying that rite to them will signify nothing.

Consent, I say, in the ‡ *subject of baptism*, is according to the Scripture account of this ordinance, essential to *the fulfilling of righteousness* therein. And whatever Mr. *Fl.* may think of it, *the righteousness* herein fulfilled is || *moral righteousness*, though in a large sense of the word. *The righteousness* of obeying a divine command is really *moral*; as the obligation to obedience results from our relation to that infinitely wise and righteous and gracious governour, from whom the command proceeds. But this obedience can never be yielded without *voluntary consent*. Consent is the very

I 2

spirit

* See Mr. *Fleming's Vindication*, pag. 58. middle. † See my *Two Discourses*, pag. 19. and the *Defence*, pag. 17. ‡ Mr. *Fleming's Vindic.* p. 58. bottom. || See *Vindic.* pag. 58. lin. 8, 9. and likewise pag. 59. at the top.

60 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, I.*

spirit of that *righteousness* which is fulfilled in obedience to precept; nor indeed can *righteousness* of any sort be fulfilled without it.

But Mr. Fl. will have it, that *righteousness* may be fulfilled, where the subject of baptism is not *at the age of consent*: pag. 58. about the middle. Nay he goes so far, (in the same page) as to affirm: 'that we have an instance of baptism applied, where *the grown persons baptized* do seem to have been *meer patients* in the application of the rite, ACTS x. 47, 48. For he adds: Peter does not ask them *their consent*; but enquires of his company, whether *they* had any objection to these gentiles being baptized: and then, *he commanded that they should be baptized in the name of the Lord.*'

But the context plainly shews, that these persons were nothing like *meer patients* in the affair. For it appears, ver. 33. that they waited for Peter, assembling solemnly *before God*, in the house of Cornelius, *to hear all things that were commanded him of God*. And it was upon this bearing, and the conviction which attended it, that they submitted to baptism: otherwise they never would have been *baptized in the name of the Lord*, let Peter have *commanded* ever so much. The apostle, by a long discourse, the heads whereof are mentioned by the historian, convinced their judgments, that Jesus Christ, in whose name he preached the gospel to them, had a right to be acknowledged and obeyed by them. The heads of the discourse were; *the miracles wrought by Jesus; the testimony of all the prophets; his resurrection; and his being ordained of God the judge of quick and dead*. And the close of it was in these remarkable words, ver. 43, *that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*. That the hearers were really convinced, and induced to believe in Jesus, appears by *the holy ghost's falling upon all them who heard the word*, ver. 44. for no greater testimony of Christ's own acknowledging them to be *his disciples*, can I think be desired. These were the foundations of Peter's appeal, ver. 47. *Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?* But it was a sufficient ground of his giving orders for their baptism, that *he himself saw their consent to obey Christ in all things, and to take on them the profession of being his*, by what

he

he heard from their own mouths in *magnifying God* upon their conversion, ver. 46. And how these could even *seem* to be *meer patients* in baptism, let Mr. *Fleming* make out, if he can.

It is not very probable that he will attempt this, because after all he seems somewhat diffident about the *fulfilling of righteousness* in a *meer patient*. For at the bottom of pag. 59. he endeavours to help the cause of infants baptism by *their after-approbation* of what was by their parents done without their consent or knowledge. But I hope our readers will consider; that *the after-approbation* of a thing, done without the *consent* or *knowledge* of the subject, if it was likewise done without any divine authority, as we insist infants baptism is; will never prove any *fulfilling of righteousness* at all. And as to what Mr. *Fleming* adds in the same paragraph, pag. 60: if many children of Antipædo-baptists do to their parents grief die unbaptized, though arrived at years of discretion and made acquainted with their duty: yet neither will this prove, that these parents ought to have baptized their children without a divine authority for it: nor do they deserve to be reproached with the wrong conduct of their children, any more than pædo-baptist parents do, for any kind of disobedience against God, into which their children fall, after the best instructions and examples they have been able to give them.

But to finish my remarks on this Section. As to *the fulfilling of righteousness in obedience* to positive institutions, I have all along laid the stress upon considering *the persons by whom it is fulfilled*. It was in pursuance of this thought, that in pag. 67. of my *Defence* I shewed, that the quibble with which Mr. *Fl.* had charged me, did indeed belong to himself; ‘for putting *infant-circumcision* and *adult-baptism*, upon the same foot of *fulfilling righteousness*, without making the necessary distinction between the subjects of the two ordinances: which distinction intirely changes the case with regard to *the persons by whom the righteousness is fulfilled*.’

He expects to clear himself by saying, pag. 61. of his *Vindication*; that ‘I have owned, that the righteousness *fulfilled* by baptism upon adult persons is a different kind
‘ of

62 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, II.*

‘ of righteousness to that *fulfilled* by obeying what we usually call a *moral* precept.’ And to the like purpose, something nearer to my words, he speaks in his 57th page. I beg the reader, instead of trusting to Mr. *Fleming*’s quotations, to read the 19th page of my *Two Discourses*, and the 67th of my *Defence*, and compare them with what he advances in the 57th and 61st pages of his *Vindication*. I had perhaps spoken more accurately, if in that 19th page of my *Discourses* I had only considered the word *morality*, when applied to *obedience to a divine command*, as taken in a sense somewhat *larger than usual*, and not spoken of *immoralities of a different kind*. However I have there sufficiently proved; that *disobedience to a divine command*, even of a *ritual* nature, is real *immorality*. I am weary of canvassing these things over and over: and therefore shall rely upon the reader’s faithfulness, in judging; first whether my opponent has fairly represented my words; and then, whether after all the pains he has taken, the difference between the *immorality* of disobeying a divine institution, and the *immorality* of breaking what we usually call a *moral* precept, will clear him from the charge brought against him, while he makes no difference between a person’s *fulfilling righteousness* by his own voluntary act, and the having a rite or ceremony applied without the subject’s *consent* or *knowledge*, in a case where both *knowledge* and *consent* are required.

Answer to Section II.

THE one question here between us is; whether of us gives the right account of the design of Jesus’s *coming unto John*, when by the direction of divine providence he was at so great a distance as *from Galilee to Jordan*? Which of us gives the true account? I; who take my words from the evangelist, *Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him*: or Mr. *Fleming*; who in a long round-about story affirms the reason was, ‘ because it was more *natural* and *easy* for our Lord to follow his *bar-binger* to the place where he had been *preparing the way*; and because the testimony of his being the *Messiah* would
‘ with

‘ with more propriety be given at the place of public baptism, than at Nazareth, where our Lord had only sustained a private character, and where the prejudices of the people run so strong against him.’ This is the substance of Mr. *Fleming*’s account, which the reader may see more at large in pag. 63. of his *Vindication*. My words, in pag. 22. of my *Defence*, which he charges with *superstition* and *mystery*, are as follows: ‘ What was *the principle*, upon which the journey was undertaken? What was *the design* of *Christ*’s coming to *John*, when he was at so great a distance as *from Galilee to Jordan*? Why did he not stay till *John* came to him? Obscure as he was at that time, and without a public character, had he not interest enough with his heavenly Father to have prevailed, that *John* might providentially be directed into those parts where he then was, and save him the trouble of the journey? Doubtless he had. But it is, I think, very manifest that *he chose* to do otherwise. To me it appears, that the blessed *Jesus chose to travel* to the place, where *John* was publicly exercising that divine commission which he had received to baptize, *with the view of doing honour to that divine commission.*’ Let the reader judge between us.

I observe here: that in our Lords paying this respect to the divine commission with which *John* was invested, those other ends were answered, which Mr. *Fleming*, without any warrant or authority, will needs make *the very ends* for which he undertook the journey: whereas *the very end* and design of *Jesus*’s coming from *Galilee to Jordan unto John*, if the evangelist is to be credited, was, *to be baptized of him*; Mat. iii. 13. Let Mr. *Fl.* charge me if he pleases, with giving *the history a superstitious turn*. I account for this, as well as the rest of our Lord’s fatiguing journies, from that one declaration of his own, JOH. vi. 38. *I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.* Nor can I see there would have been any *superstition* in undertaking the journey, even though none of those circumstances had subsisted, which Mr. *Fl.* would make *the very cause* on occasion of it.

I shall conclude with observing; that it does not appear, from

64 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

from Mr. *Fleming's* course of arguing in this Section, that he owns Jesus to have submitted to baptism out of any *respect to a divine command*; but only from the thought of 'following his harbinger to the place where he had been preparing the way for him in the character of Messiah.' But where then is that *fulfilling of righteousness*, which our Lord acknowledged *became him*, great and glorious as he was; and with the mention of which he silenced John's *objections* about administering the ordinance to him?

Answer to Section III.

IT is no wonder, that Mr. *Fl.* has in this Section laboured the point of *Jewish proselyte baptism*; because that is one of the chief hinges, upon which he makes *infant-baptism* among *christians* to turn. Let us see how he makes it out. Being called upon to prove, that God ever required the Jews to baptize their proselytes: he answers, pag. 64, 65. 'that he thinks it very proveable they were to do it, if they had not had any express command for it,' 'from the very nature of the Jewish purifications: which, he says, any man may see, who attends carefully to the Jewish statutes and injunctions, as they lie in the Mosaic code.' And then he proceeds to his particular proofs by observing; that purification by water was to be applied to a *Jew, a native Jew*, when *legally defiled*; arguing from thence, that *gentile converts*, being by their constitution esteemed *naturally impure, unholy or defiled*, nothing can be a more rational conclusion, than that they and their families should be admitted into the Jewish polity by *baptism*, or by *the water of sprinkling*. Excellent proof!

I say on the contrary; that *nothing can be more irrational*, than the pretending to prove a disputed fact by such kind of reasonings. The proof is really on the opposite side, if we will have any regard to the many warnings against *adding to or diminishing from* the divine appointments; and to the examples of those, who in Moses's own time suffered so severely for doing what they were not authorized to do. Read over *the Jewish statutes and injunctions* as often as you will, *as they lie in the Mosaic code*; and you will

III.

will no
to any
or eve
monia
priests
find or
for app
any ap
privile
by the
very w
Yet he
ing the
other v
that st
foning
xv. 15
the str
all the
selyte'
desire
cised
whole
led wi

But
comm
dren i
thing
yet th
church
Chritt
was in
ate au
in the

But
in his
tism,
profel
author

III. relating to positive Institutions. 65

will not find *one statute* for applying *this purification by water* to any other than such as were already in the Jewish polity; or even to any of them, excepting only in the case of ceremonial uncleanness, or the preparation of the Levites or priests for their office *. Mr. *F.* himself does not pretend to find one. There is no command, or so much as allowance, for applying *the water of separation* to a *gentile*; much less any appointment for receiving him, and giving him the privileges of a Jew by such application. That God, who by the hand of Moses established the Jewish constitution, very well knew the *uncleanness* and *unkholiness* of the *gentiles*: Yet he required no other rite than circumcision, for receiving them into the body of his people the Israelites. If any other was required, let the proof be produced. Till then, that statute stands in full force against all Mr. *Fleming's* reasonings, which he has quoted as if it favoured them, NUM. xv. 15, 16: *One law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.* We have therefore all the reason in the world to conclude; that upon a proselyte's declared resolution to obey the Mosaic law, and his desire to be admitted into the Jewish polity, he was circumcised and then admitted: nor is there one instance in the whole Old Testament of a person washed in water or sprinkled with it, as a token of his *profelytism*.

But even in case it had been so; in case there had been a command to the Jews, to receive proselytes and their children into their community by baptism; and in case the thing had been practised, in obedience to such command: yet that could be no rule of conduct to the christian church, unless Christ had declared he would have it so. Christ's institution of the baptism to be used in his church was *intirely his own*, and delivered as his own, by immediate authority from God: to which authority he appealed in the commission itself; MAT. xxviii. 18, 19.

But I observe further, that Mr. *F.* sets out quite wrong, in his attempt to prove the divine original of proselyte-baptism, while he pretends it was done by *sprinkling* on the proselyte *the water of separation*. For herein his beloved authors the *Rabbies*, and even the *Talmud* itself, are expres-

K

ly

* See Num. viii. and xix.

66 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

ly against him; in declaring, that *their proselyte-baptism was immersion in water.*

My proofs from the *Talmud* shall be in the words of Dr. *Wall*: who has translated them for the use of English readers. In the introduction to his *History of infant-baptism*, vol. 1. octavo, pag. 6. he quotes the *Talmud*, *Traët. Repudii*, speaking of Jethro, Moses's father in law, and saying: *He was made a proselyte by circumcision and immersion in waters.* And in pag. 5. he observes from the *Babylonic Talmud*, *Mass. Jevamotoh*, fol. 47. that *if it be a woman* who is to be received a proselyte, *the women lead her to the waters, &c.* In the same page he quotes *Gemara Babylon. ad tit. Cheritboth*, c. 2. as saying: that *the proselytes entred not into covenant, but by circumcision, baptism, and sprinkling of blood.* In which words, I observe, there is an exprefs distinction made between *the baptism* and *the sprinkling*. And no wonder: because *the sprinkling* here spoken of was a *sprinkling of blood*, that is to say, the blood of *the sacrifice* offered on that occasion. So that *the sprinkling* means no other, than what the Rabbies often exprefs by the more general name of *sacrifice*, in the description of their proselyte-baptism. And even from the *Talmud* itself an instance hereof is produced by Dr. *Wall*, in pag. 8. of the history just now referred to. It is in *Traët. Repudii*, in the following words. *Israel does not enter into covenant but by these three things: by circumcision, baptism, and peace offering: and the proselytes in like manner.* Where, by *peace-offering* is evidently meant the same thing, as by *the sprinkling of blood* in the other place: nor is any other *sprinkling* so much as intimated, or indeed any room left for it, *the three things* specified being all so clear and plain. If Mr. *Fleming* has any proof of *sprinkling the water of separation*, as one of *the three things* used on these occasions, or can make a *fourth* of it, in opposition to his admired *Talmud*; let him produce it.

As for *Maimonides*, whom Dr. *Wall* quotes likewise on this occasion; I choose to cite my proofs from him directly out of a tract of his, published by Mr. *Prideaux*, under the title *de jure peregrini*: the same *Prideaux*, as I take it, who afterwards when Dean of Norwich, wrote *the connexion of the hist. of the Old and N. Testament.* In this tract, which

is

III.

is the
profel
presen
ed: a
numitt
up.
of his
and pe
lawful
ever c
in the
likewi
numitt
marks
in Mi
is law
follow
fit for
lection
made,
wash
men k
every
cubits
draw
scribe
they
failing
ter;
A
form
in th
cerni
Then

*
quote
12. M
betwe
betwe
kind o
the b
was

III. relating to positive Institutions. 67

is the 13th chapter of *Issure Biab*, Maimonides, speaking of proselyte servants, saith, § 11. that if a servant is baptized in presence of his master, he becomes free as soon as he is baptized: and that therefore if the master would not have him manumitted, he must keep him under the waters before he rises up. And more extensively and expressly, § 13. speaking of his brethren, he saith: that they baptize proselytes, slaves, and persons manumitted, in such a receptacle of waters, as is lawful for the washing of a menstruous woman: and that whatever coming * between the water and the skin is an impediment in the ablution of the menstruous woman, is an impediment likewise in the baptism of proselytes, slaves, and persons manumitted. Upon which words Prideaux makes some remarks of his own: and then quotes Maimonides himself, in *Mikvaoth*, cap. 4. sect. 1. concerning the water which is lawful for washing. The words of Maimonides are as follows. According to the law, every conflux of waters is fit for their washing, (as it is said, Lev. xi. 36. The collection of waters shall be clean) by what means soever it is made, provided it holds so much water, as is sufficient for washing the whole body of a man with one immersion. The wise men have determined the quantity: that is to say, that it be every way of the breadth of a cubit, and the depth of three cubits, which measure would hold 40 seaks of water, either drawn or never failing. But according to the maxims of the scribes, drawn waters are unlawful for washing. Neither do they say this only: but also that if there be a conflux of never-failing waters, and into it there fall 3 logs of drawn water; that would make the whole conflux of waters unlawful.

As a farther proof, that the proselyte-baptism was performed by immersion, and not by sprinkling; Maimonides, in the 14th chapter of *Issure Biab*, § 5 and 6, speaks concerning the person persuaded to be a proselyte, as follows. Then they shall baptize him. And the three men shall stand a-

K 2

bove,

* To shew the scrupulous nicety of the Jews in their washings, Prideaux quotes here the following passage of Maimonides, in *Mikvaoth*, cap. i. sect. 12. Whether a man or vessel is washed; there shall not be any thing separating between the body to be washed and the water; and if any thing does separate between the body to be washed and the water; for example, if there be any kind of excrement, or any dirt sticking, either to the skin of the man, or to the body of the vessel; behold, that which is washed remains unclean, as it was before, nor is the washing any way profitable to it,

68 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

bove, near to him, and shall make known to him some of the smaller precepts, and some of the more weighty, a second time, while he yet stands in the water. But if it be a woman; the women shall place her in the water, up to the neck; and the judges shall stand without, and shall make known to her some precepts of lesser moment, and some of the more weighty, while she is yet in the waters: but after she is baptized before them, they shall turn away their faces, and go out, that they may not see her, while she is ascending out of the waters. The like things are said concerning a servant or slave, § 9. They shall make known to him the foundations of religion, and some precepts, and their punishments and rewards; and then shall baptize him, as they baptize the proselyte: and they shall make these things known to him, while he is in the waters.

I shall conclude my quotations relating to this affair with one which Dr. Wall makes from a modern Jew, to shew, from the practice of the present Jews, what is their notion of proselyte baptism. It is in these words. ‘*Leo Modena, in his history of them, part 5. ch. 2. speaking of a proselyte’s admission: They take and circumcise him: and as soon as he is well of his sore, he is to wash himself all over in water, and this is to be done in the presence of three Rabbins, &c. And so from thenceforth he becomes as a natural Jew.*’

I cannot tell whether all this will convince Mr. Fleming, that he has proceeded upon a grand mistake, in imagining that proselyte baptism was performed by sprinkling on the proselyte the water of separation. But whatever he may think of it, from these passages it appears: that so long as proselyte baptism has been in use, (which still I believe took its rise since our Saviour’s time and not before) it has been performed by immersion of the whole body in water, and not by sprinkling of the water of separation. And thus a great part of Mr. Fleming’s scheme of baptism, considered as only a rite of separation, derived from the use of the water of separation, fairly falls to the ground; as it is certain, that the water of separation was applied only by sprinkling. And together with it falls one of the best pretences he had to make christians believe that sprinkling is baptism; whereas, according to the notion of the Jews themselves, both ancient and modern, it is quite a distinct thing. I would therefore advise him, not

to

III. relating to positive Institutions. 69

to abound so much as he has done, in *challenges* against us as *innovators* in what he calls *the mode of baptism*. For besides that the New Testament knows no other baptism than immersion; his own authors are against him, in that *supposed* practice of the Jews, from which he vainly attempts to derive the baptism of *John*, and that of our blessed Lord.

But with regard to *the origine* of proselyte-baptism: Mr. *Fleming* had need be cautious, and not pretend to ascribe it to an *express* divine command; since *Maimonides* himself has so greatly fallen short in his attempts to derive it, upon the same foot as circumcision itself, from Scripture. In the tract of *Issure Biab*, just now quoted, cap. 13. § 1. he tells us: that *the Israelites entred into covenant three ways: by circumcision, by baptism, and by sacrifice*: and in § 2. that *the rite of circumcision was in Egypt*. For proof of this he quotes those words, EXOD. XII. 48. *No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof*, that is, of the passover. He adds: *Therefore Moses our master circumcised them, because all that were in Egypt had violated the covenant of circumcision, excepting only the tribe of Levi*. For proof of which exception he quotes the words of Moses, DEUT. XXXIII. 9. *And they kept thy covenant*.

In the next place he tells us, § 3. that *the rite of baptism was in the wilderness, a little before the giving of the Law*. For which his only proof is that text, EXOD. XIX. 10. *Thou shalt sanctifie them to day and to morrow; and let them wash their clothes*. Upon which, passing over in few words the account of *sacrifice*, which he had made the third way of the Israelites entring into covenant; he goes on, § 4. to tell us: that *so in all ages, as often as any gentile would enter into covenant, and have a station under the wings of the divine Majesty, and take upon him the yoke of the law, he has need of circumcision, baptism, and the conciliation of sacrifice*. But he is so cautious as to add; that if it be a woman, she has need only of baptism and sacrifice. Then he proceeds to his grand proof, in the following words. *According to what was said, (referring to NUM. XV. 15.) As ye are, so shall the stranger be: that is to say: As ye entred into covenant by circumcision, baptism, and the conciliation of sacrifice; so also shall the proselyte in all ages, by circumcision, baptism, and the conciliation*
of

70 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

of sacrifice. Then after observing, § 5. that upon the disuse of sacrifice there was need of nothing more than circumcision and baptism, but that when the temple should be rebuilt, sacrifice must be offered; he comes to this bold affirmation, § 6. that the proselyte who is circumcised but not baptized, or who is baptized but not circumcised, is by no means a proselyte, till he is both baptized and circumcised.

This is Maimonides's way of deriving proselyte-baptism from Scripture. But what semblance of a proof is there in his whole train of arguing? *The rite of baptism*, Maimonides tells you, *was in the wilderness, a little before the giving of the law.* But the only proof he brings, that the Israelites did there use baptism, and did thereby enter into covenant with God, is this one text, *Exod. xix. 10. Thou shalt sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes.* And the only argument upon which he builds his affirmation, that so in all ages, as often as any gentile would enter into covenant, and have a station under the wings of the divine Majesty, and take on him the yoke of the law, he must be baptized as well as circumcised; is this same text, in conjunction with that other, *Num. xv. 15. which is directly against him; As ye are, so shall the stranger be.*

As to the text in Exodus: that neither says nor intimates any thing about baptizing the persons of the people, but only *washing their clothes.* And the command, *to wash their clothes,* relates only to the extraordinary occasion of the solemn delivery of the law, which they were expecting. It was no other than a personal command, to the persons then present, on that one occasion: and did not include an obligation, either to themselves or their posterity, so much as *to wash their clothes* afterwards, however they might be bound in this respect by succeeding laws, as we find they afterwards were, when they had contracted a defilement. To pretend therefore to build, upon this occasional command to the persons then present, *to wash their clothes,* an obligation upon all persons in succeeding ages, *to have their bodies washed,* in order to their becoming proselytes; and to lay on it such a stress, as to affirm that without this no person could be acknowledged a proselyte to the law of Moses; is so excessively rash, that weakness is much too good a name for it.

Dr.

III.

Dr.
takes
Jews
he qu
ben E
But i
more
the la
ing of
of the
the l
lawgi
ments
accor
ny in
selves
ter :
4s 24
are in
their
woul
one
rash
they
lawg
his b
The
LEV
and
he sh
chap
wate
cien
ation
by I
that
men
body
E
tran

III. relating to positive Institutions. 71

Dr. Wall indeed, *Hist. of infant baptism*, vol. 1. pag. 7. takes great pains to shew, that by *washing of the clothes* the Jews understood *washing of their bodies*. To this purpose he quotes *Maimonides*, and the *Babylonian Gemara*, and *Aben Ezra*; and refers to Mr. *Selden* for many more proofs. But if he had produced them all himself, and a thousand more; they would never convince me, that *wheresoever in the law the washing of garments is mentioned, it means washing of the body*: because some times in the law *the washing of the body* is expressly mentioned, which shews that this was the lawgiver's mind; and consequently when the same lawgiver speaks in other places only of *washing the garments*, we are to conclude, that in this also, his meaning is according to his words. There are in the Mosaic law many instances of a command to the Israelites, *to wash themselves in water, to bathe in water, to wash their flesh in water*: particularly in *LEVIT. xiv. 8, 9. xv. 16, 21. xvi. 4, 24. xxii. 26*. But more expressly to our purpose, there are instances of commands, *to wash both their garments and their bodies*. Which are clear proofs, that the lawgiver would be understood to mean two distinct things by the one and the other: and can by no means consist with the rash affirmation of the Rabbies, unless in those instances they will make a direct tautology; and say, that when the lawgiver commanded any man to wash *his garments* and *his body*, he commanded him to wash *his body*, and *his body*. The instances to which I now refer are these which follow. *LEV. xiv. 8, 9. He that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water: — he shall wash his clothes; also he shall wash his flesh in water.* chap. xv. 21. *he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water.* These texts, without going any further, are sufficient to shew the rashness and the falsehood of that affirmation of the Rabbies, and of *Maimonides* in particular, quoted by Dr. Wall in his *History*, vol. 1. pag. 7. that *This is a rule: that wheresoever in the Law the washing of the body or garments is mentioned, it means still the washing of the whole body.*

But the Rabbies had a turn to serve, in this their arbitrary exposition; one of their settled customs to support;
a cus-

72 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

a custom; upon which, without any authority, they lay such a stress, as to resolve, even in opposition to the authority of God, that though a man, at his own desire of submitting to the law of Moses, were circumcised, yet if he was not likewise baptized, he should not be received as a proselyte.

The text in Numbers; *As ye are, so shall the stranger be*; is, as I just now observed, directly against the purpose for which *Maimonides* quotes it. For according to all the directions of the Mosaic laws, circumcision, without baptism, intitled a proselyte to the privileges of an Israelite. If *Maimonides* could have brought a better text to prove, that the Israelites and proselytes were in all following ages *to have their bodies washed*, in order to the entering into covenant with God, than that text which only commanded those Israelites *to wash their clothes*; who were expecting the delivery of the Law; I make no doubt he would have produced it. But it is plain he had none. And by the addition of the text in Numbers, *As ye are, so shall the stranger be*; he has destroyed even that feeble proof itself; and shewn, that the whole practice of proselyte baptism is without Scripture-foundation. Nor can I see any other way to account for it, than as the figment of the brains of the Rabbies. At what time it begun, there is no certainty. But there was time enough, between our Saviour's time and that of *Maimonides*, (who wrote about the end of the twelfth century) to have the thing begun, and carried on; and great numbers of decrees and rules made by these fanciful men relating to it; many of which are set down in this treatise of *Iffure-Biah*. No higher original or better authority than this, can I find for the whole practice: and some probability that it might begin not long after our Saviour's resurrection; I have shewn in my *Defence*, pag. 37, 38. to which I refer the reader.

I hope Mr. *Fleming* will excuse my digressing a while, from him to *Maimonides*. I now return, and observe: that it is very weak; at the best, for him to argue, *Vindic.* pag. 65, 66. *from the meer supposition of proselyte baptism*, into a proof that this was the foundation of John's baptism, and the occasion of our Lords saying, *Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness*: especially when John himself assures

III.

us he h
him to
viour
ackno
tism of
Mr. Fl
than be
gumen

For
and Ta
usefuln
from t
Christ
argue,
when a
his apo
better
be ver
ceeding

And
tice of
declare
lating
fired b
argum
cite a
greate
to cite
part w
part o
ing
he c
ing
be n
usag
If t
mor
dren
if th

III. relating to positive Institutions. 73

us he had his special commission from heaven, that *God sent him to baptize with water*; (Joh. i. 33.) and when our Saviour brought the bigoted priests and elders silently to acknowledge the same thing; that is to say, that *the baptism of John was from heaven and not of men*; Mat. xxi. 25. Mr. Fleming's conduct here therefore is not one jot better than begging the question; and can have no place in an argument.

For the same reason I reject the references to *Rabbinical* and *Talmudical* writings, notwithstanding that there is some usefulness in those writings in other respects. To argue from them to the baptism instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ; from their accounts unsupported by Scripture to argue, that Christ's ordinance must be ministred to infants, when according to the accounts given by Christ himself and his apostles it appears infants are uncapable subjects; is no better than begging the question. And therefore I must be very *weak* indeed, if I could be * *pleased* with such proceeding.

And as *weak* to the full I must be, if I do not take notice of my opponent's † *passing over in silence* what I had declared to be *of the greatest importance in the controversy relating to our practice as christians*: and this after he had desired his reader to observe, that I had rested the weight of the argument there. He tells his reader, *Vindic.* p. 66. that I cite a large passage out of my Two Discourses, *as of the greatest importance in the controversy*: and then, pretending to cite it in order to its refutation, he leaves out all that part wherein the argument is drawn up, and a very great part of the reasons produced to support it. ‡ 'Proceeding upon *the supposition* that there was such an usage as he contends for but does not prove; I shew, that according as Christ has left things in the New Testament *it can be no rule to us*, any more than if there had been no such usage. My words are as follows; *Discourse*, pag. 48, 49. 'If there was in our Saviour's time any such practice among the Jews, as baptizing profelytes, and those children which they had at the time of their profelytism; and if they did withhold baptism from those children of the

proq.

* *Vindic.* p. 66. † Pag. 66, 67.

‡ *Defence*, pag. 42.

74 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

‘ profelytes, which were born after the parents became profelytes : yet no argument can be drawn from thence, that can affect baptism in the christian church. For as there is no pretence of an obligation upon us, to do as they did, to administer baptism to the same subjects, to whom they are supposed to have ministred it : so neither does the supposing that they had the practice among them, give us any allowance to cease or to omit the practice of christian baptism, in any case where they would not have practised their baptism.’

All this, which is the principal part of *the large passage* Mr. Fl. refers to, he has left out in his quotation. I do not think fit to leave it out : but hereupon ask him : whether he can pretend to any thing like a proof, that profelyte-baptism among the Jews, even in case there had been such a practice in our Sayiour’s time, should be *a rule to us* in the christian church, Is there any pretence of *an obligation upon us*, to do as it is *supposed* (but not proved) that the Jews did ? Are we *obliged* to administer baptism to the same subjects to whom they are *supposed* to have ministred it ? Or does *the supposing* that they had the practice among them, give us any allowance to cease or to omit the practice of christian baptism, in any case where they would not have practised their baptism ?

I deny that there is any *obligation* upon us as christians, to practice in respect of baptism as the Jews are *supposed* to have practised : and Mr. Fleming has offered nothing like *a proof*. Considering the stress that is laid upon *the supposed practise* of profelyte-baptism among the ancient Jews, I enquire, (and it is an enquiry of the greatest importance relating to this *supposed* practice) whether it can be any *obligatory rule for us as christians*. Can a *Jewish* practice, founded upon no better authority than *the tradition of their elders*, be a rule, *an obligatory rule*, to *the subjects of Christ’s kingdom*, for the administration of one of *his own* ordinances ?

Mr. Fleming indeed, pag. 67. towards the bottom, pretends he has shewn, from the very nature of the *Mosaic* ordinances, that the heathen convert must undergo *a purification by water*. But in answer hereto, in pag. 64, 65. of this treatise, I have, from the plain Scripture account of the

Mo-

III.

Mosaic
that a
conver
water
were
law n
with t
But I
in the
profely
even t
church
ment :
Testam
such a
have t

In
vouch
ny fu
lytes
their
by n
far t
upon.
Christ
Mosaic
counts
go a p
in pag
sephus
will n
more t
reader
nite m
appoin
strous
dinanc
of men.

Nov

I d

III. relating to positive Institutions. 75

Mosaic ordinances, proved the contrary. I have proved; that as the *Mosaic ordinances* stand in the bible; a heathen convert was under no *obligation* to undergo a *purification by water*: and that upon submitting to circumcision; the Jews were * *obliged*; according to the express command of their law necessarily *obliged*, to receive him to equal privileges with themselves; whether he was *washed with water* or not. But I go further still: and affirm: that if there had been in the Old Testament as express a *command* for *baptizing* profelytes and their children, as for *circumcising* them; yet even that would not have affected baptism in the *christian church*, as baptism now stands described in the New Testament: because such are the accounts of baptism in the New Testament, as shew it to be the mind of Christ; that none but such as make personal profession of their own faith should have that ordinance ministred to them.

In that part of my *large passage* which Mr. *Fl.* has vouchsafed to quote, I affirm: that 'if there had been any such practice among the Jews [as baptizing of profelytes] and our Lord had designed an analogy between their baptism and that which he himself ordained: we can by no means believe; but that he would have told us *how far* the analogy should reach'. This is what I still insist upon. Mr. *Fleming*, instead of attempting to shew *how far* Christ would have this analogy reach, refers only to the *Mosaic ordinances*, and the *Rabbinical* and *Talmudical* accounts of them; to shew that a heathen convert must undergo a *purification by water*; pag. 67. And all that he adds in pag. 68. excepting *supposed* reasons for the silence of *Josephus* and *Philo* about profelyte-baptism; (which reasons will never account for their total silence) amounts to no more than this: that the use of baptismal water [I beg the reader here to observe, that he speaks only in an indefinite manner, of the use of baptismal water] was of divine appointment among the Jews. And hence he forms this monstrous conclusion: Therefore our Lord did not leave an ordinance of his own; to be explained and applied by a practice of men, that had no divine command to support it.

Now here I must ask again. Does Mr. *Fleming* really believe,

L 2

lieve,

* I desire the unprejudiced reader to take special notice of this.

76 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

lieve, or does he mean to affirm, that the practice of proselyte-baptism among the Jews was performed *in obedience to a divine command*? Does he really believe, that God *commanded them* to baptize their proselytes? If this is not his meaning; the affirming that *the use of baptismal water was of divine appointment among the Jews*, is a shameful deception of his reader. If he does believe and affirm that God *commanded* this practice; he ought to bring some exprefs proof of it, whereas he has hitherto brought none, though loudly called upon for it.

We do not deny, *that baptismal water was of divine appointment among the Jews*. Nay we affirm, that *it was of divine appointment*. And we refer, for proof, to *the laver*, wherein the * priests were commanded to wash, and to *the † washings*, appointed in certain cases to the people. As to *the water of sprinkling*; we acknowledge that likewise to be *of divine appointment*, though we cannot with Mr. Fleming call it *baptismal water*, because it was only *sprinkled*. But what is all this to *baptism in the christian church*? What if God did command the priests to wash themselves upon certain occasions, and the people to wash themselves upon other occasions? And what if he did command, that when a legal impurity, of an external kind, was contracted, *the water of sprinkling* should be applied, before the defiled person should be restored to the privileges of a Jew? Will these things prove, that the proselyte-baptism, *supposed* to have been in use among the Jews, *had a divine command to support it*? Or will this afford a satisfactory rule, how the baptism which was instituted by Christ should be applied, and to what subjects he would have it applied?

Strange way of reasoning! and what in any other man would be called *equivocation*. To say, that *the use of baptismal water was of divine appointment among the Jews*; and thence, without once observing what persons or purposes it was appointed for, to argue that *therefore Christ did not leave an ordinance of his own, to be explained and applied by a practice of men, that had no divine command to support it*! What was then *this use of baptismal water*, which was of

* See Exod. xxix. 4. xxx. 18, 19, 20. xl. 12. Levit. xvi. 4, 24.

† Lev. xiv. 8, 9. xxii. 6.

III.
divine
to affi
and th
I say
it us
inferen
the J
such a
comm
clean
perfor
and t
ration
Jews
themf
was a
point
and
divin
infer
as he
vine
In
dix.
Vind
he co
pose
' Je
' tu
' exp
inde
proc
ish p
wha
pect
he v
with
gues
the
mer
had

III. relating to positive Institutions. 77

divine appointment among the Jews? Has Mr. Fl. the face to affirm, that God commanded the Jews to baptize proselytes and their children? If there was a command for this purpose, I say again, why does he not bring it out at once, and shew it us? Why has he hitherto deduced the practice only by inferences from the use of *the water of separation*? which the Jews were not authorized to apply to any other, than such as were already members of their polity. God did command, that when they had contracted an external uncleanness, *the water of separation* should be applied to these persons. But is this commanding, that gentile proselytes, and their children, shall be baptized with *this water of separation*, in order to their enjoying the privileges of native Jews? He commanded likewise, that *the priests* should wash themselves: and consequently *this use of baptismal water* was of divine appointment. But is this commanding or appointing, that baptismal water shall be applied to proselytes and their children? Or where is *the command*; where *the divine appointment*? Methinks it had been safer to stick to inferences, weak as they were, and to make as much of them as he could, than to pretend, as Mr. Fleming does, to a *divine appointment*, and not be able to produce it.

Inferences were all that he pretended to in his *Appendix*. Nor has he produced any other kind of proof in this *Vindication*, though he has shewn a great desire to do it if he could, being expressly by me called upon for that purpose. In pag. 64, 'he thinks it very proveable, that the Jews were to baptize their proselytes, from the very nature of the Jewish purifications, if they had not had any express command for it.' From which last words one would indeed imagine, that he had *the express command* ready to produce; and that the arguing from *the nature of the Jewish purifications* was something thrown in, over and above what was needful in the case. Any one however would expect he should proceed upon *the express command*. And so he would, if he had it to proceed upon. But so it is; that without offering to produce any *express command*, he argues only by inference from the Jew ceremonially unclean, to the gentile proselyte, who had contracted no such defilement. Yet in a few pages after, that is in pag. 68, as if he had produced some plain *express command* for baptizing of pro-

78 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

profelytes, he starts up and affirms, *that the use of baptismal water was of divine appointment among the Jews*: and thence concludes; that the practice in question *had a divine command to support it*! There is no extravagancy of which a man may not be guilty, who allows himself to argue after this manner.

He goes on in the same strain, pag. 68. towards the bottom; and says: 'Farther it does not appear, that *water-baptism* had its *origine* in the institution of *Jesus*:' and again, a few lines after; 'It does not appear that *water-baptism* owed its *rise* to an institution of *Jesus*.' This I call *equivocation, shameful equivocation*: because in the place to which my opponent here refers, which is in my *Defence*, pag. 43. I do not speak of *water-baptism* in general, but expressly of *the baptism which Christ instituted*; that baptism which is *his own ordinance*; in contradistinction from the *supposed* profelyte-baptism among the Jews. Now surely the baptism which Jesus himself ordained had its *origine* in the institution of Jesus: and therefore 'must receive its full force from him; and must be understood; as to its subject and manner of administration; according to those accounts and those only; which himself and his immediate followers, commissioned by him, do give of it.' By leaving out the very point, on which in the place referred to I had laid the weight of the argument, which point was the want of analogy between the supposed practice of profelyte baptism and that baptism which it is certain Christ did ordain; Mr. *Fl.* shews his great unfairness. And in *unfair* shifts and turns, some in one way and some in another; I must needs say, this book of his abounds; more than any book of the same compass that I remember ever to have seen.

He may play with words as much as he pleases; and may talk of *a law or custom that was of divine institution*; and apply this to the baptism of Jesus, as he does, pag. 69. But the baptism of Jesus is no other way to be accounted for, than as his submission to the special command of God, given to John, *to baptize with water*. This submission to God's authority was very properly *fulfilling of righteousness*: and though it *went before* his taking on him a *public character*, yet it was in a *private character* that he submitted to it.

Mr. *Fl.*

III.

Mr.
' our
' ples
' man
' Son,
ceeds
in use
divine
tion.
' did
' insti
' with
' pract
' Jew
suranc
his rea
has no
that p
nay w
it was
any t
sion fi
a proc
the pr
an inf
separa
tile co
ness] t
ted to
found
an or
his ow
it than
a conf
As
origin
him to
an or
before
to be

Mr. Fl. is so good as to allow, in this 69th page; that our Lord did, after his resurrection, command his disciples to baptize into a more enlarged view of the divine manifestations; to wit, *into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy ghost.* But in what follows, he proceeds upon the foot of taking for granted, that baptism was in use before our Saviour's time, as a ceremony founded on divine authority; which is begging the very thing in question. And hereupon he confidently affirms: 'that Christ did manifestly adopt an ordinance, that was not of his own instituting, which was to be used by his own disciples, and with no other explication of the *modus* of it, than the practice of John, and the ancient usage of it among the Jews.' All this I absolutely deny: and wonder at his assurance in affirming that this was manifestly the case; when his readers must see, that though called upon to do it, he has not been able to produce one text of Scripture to prove, that proselyte-baptism had any divine command to support it; nay when he has not been able so much as to prove, that it was an ancient usage among the Jews; or that John knew any thing of it, though he did, by immediate commission from God, baptize with water. All the semblance of a proof that Mr. Fleming has given, of a divine authority for the practice of proselyte baptism among the Jews, is only an inference, from the command of applying the water of separation to a Jew legally unclean, that therefore the gentile convert [who had contracted no such kind of uncleanness] must be purified with water, before he could be admitted to the privileges of a Jew. Now upon this miserable foundation for him to affirm, that Christ did manifestly adopt an ordinance that was not of his own instituting, to be used by his own disciples, and with no other explication of the *modus* of it than the practice of John and the ancient usage of the Jews, is a confidence almost without example.

As to the baptism of John: 'tis plain that it owed its original to an immediate commission from God, who sent him to baptize with water. Joh. i. 33. And if Christ did adopt an ordinance, which his heavenly Father had, but a little before, instituted to be practised by John as his forerunner, to be submitted to by the people in token of their believing the

80 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

the approach of that kingdome which he was to set up: yet Christ's instituting the same ordinance, by immediate authority from his heavenly Father, to be submitted to by his disciples, in token of their believing in him, as the Messiah already come, made that ordinance *intirely his own*: and therefore it must be administred to no other subjects, nor in any other way, than he himself appointed. If we deviate from his appointment, we make an ordinance of *our own*, and do not obey *the ordinance of Christ*.

In the delivery of the commission itself, as I have often already observed, Christ mentions *the authority and power* which he had received from the Father, (and not *the practice of John*, or *the supposed ancient usage of the Jews*) as the foundation of the ordinance which he himself then instituted; and thereby made it his own. *All power* [*παρα ἐξουα*, all authority] *is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c.* Upon the joining of which two things in the same commission, *teaching* and *baptizing*, and ascribing the foundation of both to the very same divine authority, I ask Mr. Fleming; whether Christ commissioned his apostles *to preach the gospel* by virtue of any *ancient usage of the Jews*, or *the practice of John the baptist*; or whether it was by virtue of a *power*, which he himself had, and which was *given to him of God*? If we will believe Christ's own words, he did it in exertion of a *power*, which he himself really had, and which God gave to him. Why now the very same *authority*, which Christ had for commissioning his apostles *to preach*, if we can believe him, he had for commissioning them *to baptize*. Baptism therefore, in the christian church, is *wholly and intirely* Christ's ordinance. 'It receives its full force from him, (as I observe in my *Discourse*, pag. 49.) and must be understood, as to its subject, as to its manner of administration, and as to its continuance, according to those accounts, and those only, which himself, and his immediate followers commissioned by him, do give of it.'

But whereas Mr. Fl. affirms, *that our Lord neither gave any new direction about the subjects of baptism, nor about the manner of administration; but adopted an ordinance that was*

not

III.

not of b
ciples,
practice
I obser
practice
baptism
incapab
were b
which
of. If
ancient
direction
ministra
to whic
accordi
tive Je
nother
in a ch
childre
ther p
profely
childre
of Mr.
ples h
princip
he ours
the div
by bap
guided
than su

The
reconfi
25. W
neither
be, w
mony?
that i
' bap
' that
' bou

III. relating to positive Institutions. 81

not of his own instituting, which was to be used by his own disciples, with no other explication of the *modus* of it, than the practice of John, and the ancient usage of it among the Jews; I observe: that if we are to take our explication from the practice of John, infants are of course excluded. For John's baptism was the baptism of repentance; of which infants are incapable. And John baptized no infants: the multitudes were baptized by him, *confessing their sins*, Mat. iii. 6. which *confession* infants neither could make, nor had need of. If Christ's baptism is to be explained by the supposed ancient usage of it among the Jews, and he himself gave no new direction, either about the subjects or about the manner of administration: it must then relate only to the same subjects to which this usage is supposed to have been applied; which according to Mr. Fleming's own account were, not the native Jews or their children, but only the proselytes from another religion and their children. Of course therefore, in a christian country there is no pretence for baptizing the children of such as are christians already; or indeed any other persons whatever, excepting only those few, who are proselyted to christianity from some other religion, and their children along with them. This is the natural consequence of Mr. Fleming's argument: and according to these principles he has no foundation for his practice; whereas the principles laid down in my *Two Discourses* abundantly justify ours; as they lay a firm obligation upon all who believe the divine authority of Christ's doctrine, to take upon them by baptism the profession of it, and the resolution to be guided by it; and discourage the baptizing of any other than such as make this profession.

The remainder of the third Section Mr. Fl. takes up in reconsidering the question put to John the baptist, Joh. 1. 25. *Why baptizest thou, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet*: the purport of which to me seems to be, *what authority hast thou to bring up a new religious ceremony?* On the contrary Mr. F. affirms, *Vindic.* pag. 70. that it seems plain, from the 'gospel history of John's baptism, and the manner in which the people treated it, 'that it was no new thing, and that they only enquire about his authority.'

82 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

I do not think it worth the while, to examine his conjectural applications of texts in the Old Testament to the characters of *the Christ, Elias, and that prophet*. 'Tis sufficient to observe: that when the question was put to John, relating to those characters; the Jews, who saw him come *baptizing with water*, upon the proclaimed *approach of the kingdom of heaven*, might easily see he was *introducing a new constitution*, whether *profelyte-baptism* had been in use before or not; but that the thought would strike them more strongly, if his proclaiming the approach of *a new constitution* was attended, as it might be expected it would be, with the administration of *a new rite*. They had reason enough to ask in this case, why he pretended to exercise this authority in the use of this new rite, till he assured them, that *God sent him to baptize*, and that *he was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make strait the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias*. Let Mr. F. therefore be ever so certain, *that profelyte-baptism must have been in use among the Jews, when God sent John to baptize with water*; yet he must use much better arguments than he has hitherto, before he will make it so much as probable to others.

'Tis pity, that with all this *certainty* he pretends to, he cannot bring *one probable historical instance* in its favour. I have a very probable one against it; the story of *Achior*, the *Ammonite* commander, in the book of *Judith*. Which book, 'tis plain, was written by a Jew: and treats of a war carried on against the Jews, at the time *when they were newly returned from the captivity, when all the people of Judea were lately gathered together, and when the vessels, and the altar, and the house, (that is, the temple) were sanctified after the profanation*: chap. iv. 3. This account will very well fall in with the time of *Ezra*: in whose day *profelyte-baptism* is pretended to have been an established custom.

Now in chap. xiv. 10. we are assured, that *Achior* became a *profelyte* by *circumcision*: and not the least account or intimation is given of any *baptism* going along with it. *When Achior had seen all that the God of Israel had done, he believed in God greatly, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was joined unto the house of Israel unto this day*. In the old Latine version the expression is somewhat more particular.

III.

particu
Israel sh
and cir
people
day.
and sub
require
this bo
If it
if it w
phanes
swering
jectures
ænigm
king w
but ab
makes
advoca
tainty
great v

Tha
ty, has
which
likewi
translat
the ene
ing the
Englis

But
Antioch
Thoug
sufficie
non: t
it was,
nifying
story
gives t
tumrise
family,
of the

200

III. relating to positive Institutions. 83

particular : Then Achior, seeing the power which the God of Israel shewed, left off the rite of heathenism, believed in God, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was added to the people of Israel ; and all the succession of his family unto this day. Hence it appears : that a profession of faith in God, and submitting to the rite of circumcision, were all that was required for the reception of a proselyte, at the time when this book was written.

If it was written long after *Ezra's* time ; particularly, if it was in the begining of the reign of *Antiochus Epiphanes* ; as *Grotius*, from chap. iv. 2. and ix. 11, 18. (answering to ver. 8, and 13. in our translation) probably conjectures ; adding, that it seems to have been written in an ænigmatical way, to comfort the Jews, when this wicked king was preparing to profane their temple : then it was but about 175 years before our Saviour's time. Which makes yet worse for the cause of *proselyte-baptism* : as the advocates for that practice pretend to a much greater certainty of its being in use near our Saviour's time, than a great while before.

That it could not ^{but} be written later than the Jewish captivity, has already been shewn, from the book itself, ch. iv. 3 : which expressly affirms that it was *after their return* : as does likewise chap. v. 23, answering to ver. 19. in our English translation. Other passages speak of *the captivity* itself ; of the enemies *casting down their temple to the ground, and taking their cities* : particularly, chap. v. 22, answering to our English, ver. 18.

But whether it was written in the days of *Ezra* or of *Antiochus* ; the argument against *proselyte-baptism* is strong. Though there are many things in the book of *Judith* which sufficiently justifie protestants in rejecting it from the Canon : tis sufficiently plain from the whole tenor of it ; that it was, after the captivity, written by a Jew, for the magnifying of his own nation ; and that this Jew, relating the story of an extraordinary person's becoming a proselyte, gives this account of it ; that *he believed in God, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was thereupon, with his family, joined to the house of Israel*. Here is a full account of the means, through which *Achior* was acknowledged a

84 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, III.*

profelyte, without the least mention or intimation of *baptism*: whereas if it were true, that a man was not acknowledged a profelyte without *baptism* as well as *circumcision*, it is not to be believed, but that *the baptism* of this eminent profelyte would have been mentioned as well as his *circumcision*.

But besides that no example is produced, of the practice of profelyte-baptism among the ancient Jews; the silence of the primitive christian writers concerning it is at least a strong probability, that the practice was quite unknown in our Saviour's time. And as for *the losing of the memory of Jewish traditions, while the christians made no enquiry after the Jews or their amusements*; which some assign as the reason of the silence so discernible in the writings of the Greek and Latine fathers concerning Jewish traditions in general: that will by no means account for their silence about *profelyte-baptism* in particular, and the derival of christian baptism from it. It is altogether unaccountable; that the want of intimate acquaintance with the Jews and their Code of traditions, which Code was not collected together till about 200 years after Christ, should make all the christian writers, from Christ's time to that period, so unacquainted with the practice of profelyte-baptism, as their writings shew them to have been, if the thing itself was in constant use in Christ's own time. Nor is it any way credible; that those christians, who lived nearest to our Saviour's time, and who best knew what had been the state of affairs at the beginning and in the progress of his ministry, should say nothing of his deriving his own initiatory institution from *a profelyte-baptism* among the Jews, if the thing had really been true, and *known to be so*. Could the practice of baptizing profelytes and their children be in constant use in the days of Christ and his apostles, when numbers of profelytes were added to that people: and could Christ's institution of his own baptism be then *known to be derived from it*; and yet the christian fathers, for the first 200 years after Christ, that is, till the Jewish Code of traditions was published, be so silent about these things, that it cannot be proved from their writings that they had any notion of them? He who will believe this must be credulous indeed, to a high degree.

Upon

III

Up
upon
ment
tiani
notio
learn
largel
receiv
some
put t
pract
in an
than
comm
vain
else t
whol
der t
as th
the e
pose
the c

I
follow
lytes
tence
form
then
mani
had
Jewi
need
tend
cisi
titled
since
leges

(
Chap
apli
atha
ing
nra
page

III. relating to positive Institutions. 85

Upon the whole: the business of *profelyte-baptism* stands upon the most precarious foundation: being never once so mentioned or even refer'd to by the ancient writers of christianity, as to give a satisfactory proof that they had any notion of it; never once referred to by *Josephus* or *Philo*, learned Jews, both of whom, in the first century, wrote largely of the antiquities and customs of their own nation; receiving *its whole historical evidence* from Jewish Rabbies, some ages after our Saviour's time; and all their accounts put together being nothing like a proof that the thing was practised in ancient times; besides that if it was practised in ancient times, it could be done from no other authority than *the tradition of the elders*, whereby they *made void the commands of God*. The reasonings upon this argument are vain and of no force; because unsupported by any thing else than meer *supposition*; and because there is in the whole affair no pretence of a *rule*, or *obligation*, to us under the gospel. And finally, the reference to such passages, as that of *sprinkling many nations*, cited by Mr. *Fleming* in the end of his 3d Section, is altogether wide from the purpose; as is easily seen, by comparing the text itself with the context. (+)

I shall close my Answer to the III^d Section with the following Dilemma. Was baptism administred to profelytes *before* their circumcision, or *after*? If upon the pretence of cleansing from the impurities contracted in their former heathen state, it was administred *before* circumcision: then it was made *the very initiatory ordinance itself*, to the manifest contempt of that rite of circumcision, which God had expressly ordained to be the token of intitling them to Jewish privileges. If it was *after* circumcision: then it was needless and ineffectual to the purpose for which it is pretended to have been used; the profelyte being by circumcision itself, according to the direction of God, already intituled to all the privileges of a Jew, and having never, since that circumcision, forfeited his title to those privileges.

(+) "It has been affirmed of some, that it" [baptism] "was an initiating rite applied to profelytes to Judaism. I was once of that opinion; but am now persuaded the writings of Moses do give it no countenance, but rather the reverse." See Dr. H.'s Open Address of 1771. Printed for J. Towers 1771.

Answer to Section IV.

MR. *Fleming's* fourth Section begins with a quotation from my *second Discourse*, containing my *conclusion* from the *principles* on which it is built. I argue: that 'if those principles are true; then it will follow, that it was not the mind of Christ that any others should be baptized, than those who make a personal profession of faith in him; such a faith as includes repentance for sin, and hope in the mercy of God through him.' The principles upon which this conclusion is built are summarily recited in my next words, quoted by Mr. *Fl.* in his 72d page. But in his remarks, in the same page, he evades the force of the argument contained in the very passage he quotes from me, and turns to quite another point. The reader sees, that in that place I am not arguing from any one text in particular. I am not there arguing in particular from the commission *to teach and baptize all nations*; but from *that view to repentance and turning from sin*, which Christ's institution of baptism has *throughout the whole New Testament*. And whereas he pretends: 'that we are eternally begging the question, while we lay down this as a principle, that because *all nations* were to be taught before they were baptized, therefore the children of the converts of all nations must *first* be educated in the christian doctrine, before they have the initiating rite applied;' and *denies that we have any authority* for this: I answer, that our *authority* is firm and evident; and that indeed the proceeding upon any other principle, and particularly the deriving christian baptism from a *supposed* usage of the Jews, is *begging the question*. Our authority, I say, is firm and evident: for no other among *the nations* are commanded to be *baptized*, but such as are *taught*; and consequently not *till* they are *taught*. See pag. 48. of this treatise; where this point is particularly considered.

It is in vain to say, as Mr. *F.* does in the same page, that 'the description I give of baptism would much better suit *the memorial rite*,' till he shews by some good proof, that my description of *baptism* itself is wrong. I still af-

firm,

firm,
course
' any
' per
fais fo
I affir
my p
I co
Testa
' tism
' the
' and
' hop
any o
which
' me
ly ag
really
bapti
In th
to th
for an
take
of gi
case
For
to rep
com
notw
himf
dom
ackn
exter
this
right
bapt
fns.
fants
his e

IV. relating to positive Institutions. 87

firm, that from the principles laid down in my *second Discourse* it follows; that 'it was not the mind of Christ that any others should be baptized than those who make a personal profession of faith in him!' All that Mr. Fl. says for answer amounts to no more than a denial of what I affirm, without doing any thing towards proving, that my premisses are incapable of supporting the conclusion.

I consider the view of baptism throughout the whole New Testament: and affirm, among other things, that 'baptism has, throughout the New Testament, excepting only the single case of our Lord himself, a view to repentance and turning from sin, and was designed to exhibit the hope of pardon.' Mr. Fl. does not offer to disprove this, any otherwise than by catching hold of *the single exception*; which he will have to be 'of great * weight in the argument;' not seeing, that whatever weight it has is intirely against him. He does not consider where the exception really lies. It is only an exception in the case of John's baptism; not in the baptism instituted by Jesus himself. In that baptism there is *no exception* at all; nor, according to the account given of it in the New Testament, any room for an exception. Repentance is required from *all* who partake of it; as that very *faith in Christ*, the profession whereof gives a right to baptism, includes *repentance*. But in the case of John's baptism there was room for an exception. For though it is certain, that *John baptized with water unto repentance*: yet there was that, in the large extent of his commission, which † reached the case of our blessed Lord, notwithstanding his perfect purity and innocency; as Jesus himself believed and acknowledged *the approach of the kingdom of heaven*, and John's business was to baptize into the acknowledged belief of that *approach*. This was the most extensive part of John's commission for baptizing: and as this reached our Lord's case, he accounted it *a fulfilling of righteousness* to submit to it. To all others whom John baptized it was *the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins*. And for this very reason it was not applicable to infants: nor can I find in John's history one intimation of his ever baptizing an infant. To Jesus himself it could not be

* *Vindic.* p 73.

† See my *Two Discourses*, pag. 11, 12.

88 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, IV.*

be *the baptism of repentance*, because he had no sins to repent of. But this does not at all affect the case of the baptism instituted by Jesus : which in every subject requires a personal profession of belief in him as *Saviour*, and that very belief includes *repentance*.

This I think I had proved in my *Discourses* : and Mr. *Fl.* should have disproved it if he could. Instead of which he argues from an exception, which has not the least relation to the baptism which Christ instituted to the subjects of his kingdom, *that baptism may be applied to subjects who have no sins to repent of, even to infants, to whose purity and innocency Christ has likened his own kingdom.* Now this *purity and innocency* I have shewn to be reasons why the baptism instituted by Christ cannot belong to them. The baptism therefore of our blessed Lord, instead of favouring in the least degree the baptism of infants, makes directly against it.

In pag. 74. the *Vindicator* addresses the passions of his readers, in behalf of infants : and misapplies the historical fact, of *bringing certain infants unto Jesus*, to the bringing infants indefinitely, into the christian church. Not one of the texts which mention this *bringing of infants unto Jesus*, gives the least intimation that they were baptized, or brought to him with any such view : but only that he might *touch them, put his hands on them, and pray, and bless them* : that on this occasion our Lord encouraged *the bringing of children to him*, and recommended to his disciples their humble docility ; assuring them, that *of such, that is to say, persons of such a disposition, is the kingdom of heaven* ; and that *whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, that is, with that humble and teachable disposition which is visible in children, shall in no wise enter therein.* This is all the account the evangelists give of the matter. See MAT. XIX. 13. MAR. X. 13. LUK. XVIII. 15. answering to expressions of like kind, MAT. XVIII. 1—4. If Mr. *Fleming* had on this occasion proved, that the infants of christian parents, *trained up by them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, did really lose any thing, by not having an ordinance ministred to them, of which the New Testament declares them incapable ; or if he had proved, that the

IV.

the inf
him w
it happ
the ch
taken
knowle
than w
cision :
though
till the

Tha
appear
tize, N
given
sufficie
of this
with th
John
baptism
the do
confid
ving
them.

For
only o
the D
and f
brings
relatin
cloud
friend
tions,
will y
ment
ly ob
every
them,

Th
largel
tise,

IV. relating to positive Institutions. 89

the infants brought to Jesus were baptized, or brought to him with any such design; he had said something: but so it happens, that he has said nothing. The advantages which the children of christian parents enjoy before they are taken into the church, merely by being educated in the knowledge of the christian religion, are unspeakably greater, than what the Jewish children could enjoy by their circumcision: so that *children are no losers by the gospel dispensation*, though there be no precept for taking them into the church, till they themselves come to desire it.

That Christ * did not think *infants fit subjects for baptism*, appears from both the accounts of his commission to baptize, MAT. XXVIII. and MAR. XVI. and from the accounts given by his apostles, who had their instructions from him; sufficient instances whereof I have produced in pag. 53, 54. of this treatise. That John did not baptize *infants along with their parents*, appears in that the persons baptized by John *confessed their sins*, Mat. iii. As to *the origine of water baptism*, the personal conduct of Christ towards infants, and *the doctrine of the households*: they have been sufficiently considered already; and therefore there is no need of giving a fresh answer to what is here repeated concerning them.

For what is said in pag. 75, 76, concerning Dr. Gale: I only desire, that the reader would be so good as to consult the Dr. in pag. 256, 257, of his *Reflexions on Wall's history*, and suffer him to speak for himself. What Mr. Fl. here brings, is only a repetition of what I have answered already, relating to the *Abrahamic covenant*, and *the baptism in the cloud and in the sea*. The words of his anonymous judicious friend, relating to infants as *the natural, proper parts of nations*, whereas unbelievers and idiots are only *excrescences*, will yield him no help, in opposition to Dr. Gale's argument in the pages cited from him: since, as the Dr. justly observes, our Lord, who does not say, *every person of every nation, or all of all nations*, could mean only *such of them, as were capable of baptism, and would receive it*.

The reflexion in pag. 77. concerning *the households*, I have largely considered in pag. 34, 35, 36, 37. of this treatise. And for answer to the remainder of that 77th page,

N

and

* *Vind.* pag. 74, 75.

90 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, IV.*

and part of the next, I must intreat the reader to consult from pag. 23 to pag. 33 of this treatise, where the misapplication of the word *Seal* is largely shewn: but more especially pag. 35, 36, which refer to these two pages of Mr. *Fleming's* in particular.

Great pains are taken, pag. 78, 79. to shew; that *the females* of old were included in the covenant as well as *the males*, notwithstanding that circumcision, which Mr. *Fl.* still calls *the seal of the covenant*, was applicable *only to the males*. I am glad he will allow, that what he calls *the seal* was applicable *to the males only*, while he himself insists, that *to the females* it was a *token*. For this may do something towards shewing him, that it was, both *to male* and *female*, no other than a *token* of good things promised, and no *seal* at all, which is the thing I insist upon: for if circumcision was *the very seal of the covenant*; then the females, by not being circumcised, were left out of the covenant. But circumcision's being to the females even a *token* of a former covenant, will not help Mr. *F.* one jot, with relation to baptism in the christian church, and particularly its application to infants.

Let it be allowed; that the applying of circumcision *to the males only* did make, both with regard to males and females, a sufficient distinction between the Israelites and all other nations. Let it be allowed; that circumcision was a *visible token* of the covenant made with Abraham; pointing out his posterity as a people under God's special care; and (I may safely add) directing them to expect that the promised Messiah should arise from among them. It was fit that there should be a *visible token*, for answering these purposes: and it was sufficient if this was imprinted upon *the males only*. But *when the fulness of time was come*; when it would answer no good end to have this people any longer distinguished from others; when the expected Messiah had made his appearance; there was no need, in settling the constitution of his kingdom, to have any such *visible token* to distinguish the subjects of it. A rite which left no mark behind it was sufficient to put people in mind of the voluntary engagements, which he would have them take upon themselves to be his faithful servants; and this was so ordered,

IV.

dered,
These
two te
But th
in the
subject
ately p
to the
that th
fession
iii. 26
Jesus:
have
man w
renewe

As
their
and no
it as a
thing
in the
of Go
tism;
applie
least
which
his bo
I have
pag.

An
• som
I hav
Acts
ved w
infern
believ
43. I
it mu
the ri

IV. relating to positive Institutions. 91

dered, as to make no difference between *male* and *female*. These thoughts answer the design of the apostle, in those two texts quoted by Mr. Fleming, Gal. iii. 28. Col. iii. 11. But those texts are far from shewing, that baptism succeeded in the place of circumcision, so as to be applied to all the same subjects, and particularly to infants. The words immediately preceding both of them, especially those in the epistle to the Galatians, give such an account of baptism as shews; that though both *male* and *female* have a right to it, on profession of faith in Christ, yet infants are incapable of it: Gal. iii. 26, 27. *Ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus: for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.* Col. iii. 9, 10. *Ye have put off the old man with his deeds: and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.*

As to the observation, pag. 80, 81, that the apostles in their epistles speak of baptism as an ordinance to be observed, and not laid aside: if Mr. Fl. can shew, that they speak of it as applicable to or designed for infants; he will say something to the purpose. But to infer, from former oeconomies in the application of circumcision, that this was the mind of God under the gospel dispensation with regard to baptism; and to affirm confidently, that if baptism is not to be applied to the infants of professing christians, we have not the least authority from Scripture to apply it in the manner for which I contend; is only the same thing over again with which his book so much abounds; that is, begging the question. I have abundantly proved the contrary to his assertion, in pag. 48, 49, of this treatise.

And now, for the closing stroke of the fourth Section, some pages are taken up with the design of shewing, that I have misrepresented the words of the evangelist Philip, Acts viii. 37. when he told the eunuch, that if he believed with all his heart, he might be baptized. From which I inferred; that according to Philip's judgment, if he did not believe, he might not be baptized. See my *Two Discourses*, pag. 43. In my *Defence*, pag. 47, 48, 49. I plainly shew, that it must be the profession of believing, that should give the eunuch the right to be baptized; and that without this Philip would not

N 2

baptize

92 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, IV.*

baptize him. Let Mr. Fl. go on, and strain the evangelist's words (or mine) as much as he will, beyond their visible intention: yet to an impartial reader of the context it will plainly appear; that Philip would not have baptized the eunuch, if the eunuch had not made some such profession of faith in Christ, as that upon which he actually was baptized; and that Philip made this declaration of faith in Christ the very condition upon which depended the eunuch's being baptized or not. We find, that in the conversation between them, Philip had *preached to him Jesus*; Acts viii. 35. and particularly had explained and applied some ancient Scripture-prophecies, which proved that Jesus was the promised Messiah. From the same conversation it is easily seen; that Philip had informed the eunuch it was the mind of Jesus that his disciples should be baptized. From such premisses as these naturally followed what we are told in ver. 36. that an opportunity for baptism presenting itself, *as they were on their way, by their coming to a certain water, the eunuch said, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?* He inwardly knew, that he believed in Jesus; and had been informed by Philip, that Jesus required his disciples to be baptized: he would not therefore delay what he accounted his duty, and what he seems likewise to claim as his privilege. But observe in what manner he expresses himself; for Philip's words are, and ought to be looked upon as a proper answer to the eunuch's question. Sais the one, *What doth hinder me to be baptized*, when so fair an opportunity presents? Sais the other, in answer to him, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest*: plainly intimating, that if he did not believe with all his heart, that want of believing with all his heart *ought to hinder him*, ought to prevent his being baptized: that is to say, he ought not to dare *to be baptized as a disciple of Christ*, if he did not *heartily believe in him*. Now though the eunuch himself could not fail of knowing that he did thus believe; yet it must be his *declaring* and *professing* this belief, that must satisfy Philip of his right to baptism, and shew that no *hindrance* remained in the way. And by Philip's answer to the question it plainly appears; that if the eunuch had not made some such declaration as he did, some profession, signifying that he did *believe with all his heart*;

Philip

IV. relating to positive Institutions. 93

Philip would not have baptized him, but would have accounted the want of such profession a sufficient *hindrance* or impediment. As to the *sincerity* or *insincerity* of the profession; Philip left that, and so do we also in our practice leave it, to the judgment of God.

This procedure of Philip I do, in my *Disc.* pag. 43. bring in, as one of *the reasonings upon baptism*, mentioned in the New Testament. And when it is compared with the other *reasonings* of like kind, many of which are quoted in that and the next page, and compared with *the plainest sense of the words of the commission*, and with *the examples of baptism upon record*; all which are referred to, and drawn into the argument, in the same 43^d page: it amounts to all that I pretend to prove from it.

It is Mr. *Fleming's* inference, not mine, that *if Philip's answer be made a rule of baptism, then none must be baptized but what believe with all their heart*. But though I did not make the inference, yet I thus far agree to it; that with regard to the baptized it is universally a rule, that none ought to dare to be baptized as disciples of Christ, but such as are conscious that they do *heartily believe in him*. But it is about *the profession of this hearty belief*, that Mr. *Fl.* and I differ. What I have affirmed and do still affirm is: that according to Philip's *reasoning*, in the case before us, compared with *the reasonings* in other parts of the New Testament, and with *the commission* itself, and *the examples of baptism upon record*, (and this is the very manner in which I introduced this whole affair) no other persons ought to be baptized, than those who profess *that they heartily believe in Christ*.

This consideration, of *circumstances introducing*, and of *comparison* with other passages of Scripture relating to the same argument, is a sufficient answer to the unfair parallel, drawn by Mr. *Fl.* from the words of our Saviour, Mar. xvi. 16. *he that believeth not shall be damned*. For it plainly appears from the verse immediately preceding; that our Lord is not speaking of infants, or of any other persons but such *to whom the gospel is preached*, and who notwithstanding that preaching remain in unbelief, and refuse to embrace the gospel preached to them. *Go ye into all the world,*

94 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, V.*

world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that [here-upon] believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned. Mr. Fleming therefore, in drawing this parallel, has injured the words, both of the evangelist Philip, and of our blessed Lord himself.

Answer to Section V.

THE fifth Section begins, p. 84. with observations upon the word βαπτίζω, as used in 1 COR. x. 2. And a citation is made from my *Defence*. ‘Which citation, Mr. F. says, is sufficient of itself to shew, how far I will take pains to rack my invention, rather than part with my confined sense of the word.’ But I hope the impartial reader will take notice, that in that same citation I consider *the overwhelming with the cloud, and the encompassing by the sea, as no other than bearing, in an allusive sense, the resemblance of plunging*; whereas Mr. F. in his *Appendix*, pag. 14. would make *the Israelites being baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ‘a good illustration, and an idea of baptism without plunging.’* How he makes this out, he has not yet told us. I have pretended to no more than *an allusive sense*. And I am still of opinion; that in this sense *the overwhelming and encompassing* abovementioned do with much more propriety bear the resemblance of *plunging, and covering the body with water, than of sprinkling, or pouring on a few drops.*

Mr. F. may abound with his scoffs as much as he pleases: and say, as he does, p. 85. that *I was surely overwhelmed in a cloud, when I thus attempted to support my confined sense of the word βαπτίζω*: and again pag. 86. that *it would suit well my allusive sense or my argument, if St. Paul had happened to have said, that the Egyptians were so baptized, rather than the Israelites.* But notwithstanding these reflections, my account of *the allusive sense* is abundantly justified by the apostle’s own words, in the verse immediately before the text in question. For he expressly says, 1 COR. x. 1. that *the fathers were UNDER the cloud, and PASSED THROUGH the sea*: and whether these expressions bear a nearer allusion to *covering the whole body, or to sprinkling or pouring a few drops on it, let the reader judge.*

But

But I cannot here forbear observing, what I have intimated already, pag. 47. of this treatise; that the reigning thought in the apostle's mind in this passage was, not the explaining what application of water best answered the design of christian baptism; but the shewing, that in christian baptism a personal profession is made, of faith in that Jesus, into whose name christians are baptized. With regard both to *the cloud* and *the sea*, the reigning thought in the apostle's mind, when he said that *the Israelites were*, in both, *baptized unto Moses*, was; that on both these occasions they shewed themselves *the voluntary disciples and followers of Moses*, upon the conviction that God had commissioned him to be their guide and instructor, whose directions they ought to obey, particularly as their guide in the way to the promised land. And this answers, with the greatest propriety, to our being, in the gospel dispensation, *baptized into Christ*, ($\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ Χριστον, Rom. vi. 3. Gal. iii. 27.) as *the Israelites were baptized*, $\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ τον Μωϋσην, *into Moses*, 1 Cor. x. 2. The apostle's expression, I say, answers with the greatest propriety to christians being *baptized into Christ*, as their guide to the heavenly *Canaan*, upon the professed conviction of his being appointed of God for that purpose. But as great numbers of the Israelites mentioned in this disputed text acted contrary to their profession, and shewed themselves unworthy of the privileges they enjoyed: so the apostle, (which is the drift of his whole argument for the first 15 verses of the chapter) intreats the baptized Corinthians, as *professed disciples of Christ*, to take care, lest notwithstanding their baptism, and all the christian privileges which in consequence thereof they enjoyed in Christ's church, they should, by acting contrary to their duty and their profession, incur God's righteous displeasure, as numbers of those Israelites did. Concerning whose wickedness and punishment the apostle expressly says, ver. 11. that *all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and that they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*.

This is manifestly the apostle's view. And this accounts infinitely better for his expressions, than the meer *separation* of the Israelites from the Egyptians, about which Mr. F. makes

96 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, V.*

F. makes such a stir, and of which he is so full through his whole book; resolving to make *baptism* mean *nothing else*, notwithstanding the plain New Testament accounts, that it is the action whereby we take upon ourselves *the profession* of being Christ's disciples.

I might add with regard to *the cloud*: that it was but very little used to the purpose of a *separation*; only during that little time, in which the Egyptians pursued the Israelites: whereas all the while that it was employed during the travels through the wilderness, (wherein it went *before* them, and not *behind* them as it did during the *separation* from the Egyptians) it was *one continued declaration* of the Israelites who traveled by the guidance of it, that they acknowledged Moses, who in the name of God had directed them to take these long wearisome journies towards the promised land, to be commissioned of God for that purpose; one continued *profession* of obedience to Moses, and of faith in that God, who interposed in such extraordinary ways to produce that obedience in them.

This account of the passage 1 COR. x. 2. so strongly supported by the train of the apostle's argument throughout the whole context, at once cuts off all the reasonings of Mr. *F.* in his 87th and 88th pages, relating to his beloved topics of the *separation*, and *the households*, which have already been fully answered. The use therefore of the word βαπτίζω, in this text, will by no means justify the application of baptism to infants; because that has neither precept nor precedent to support it; both which are clear for immersing the adult in water, on profession of their faith. I shall add no more at present, than only to observe, with what contempt Mr. *Fleming* in these pages speaks of *the few, that at this day actually profess their faith by baptism*; and to put the reader in mind, that I have never confined Christ's visible church to * *that small number*, though I still insist upon it, that this actual profession is *the regular, the only regular way*, of admission into it.

And now we are come back to the enquiry about the sense of the præposition εἰς, in MAR. i. 9. where I observe, it is used in its *primary* and proper sense, which is INTO.

Jesus

* See pag. 40. of this treatise.

V. relating to positive Institutions. 97

Jesus was baptized of John into Jordan. This I observe is all one as to say, *he was baptized IN Jordan*: only that the former is more *emphatical* for proving, that by *baptism* the historian meant *plunging into the water*. See my *Defence*, p. 30.

These things are plain and clear to any ordinary reader, But to evade their force Mr. F. leads him a dance about *the true end of baptism*; a thought, with which the plain historical fact in the text has nothing to do. He tells you, p. 89. that 'the præposition, so rendred, diverts the mind 'from *the true end of baptism*; for εἰς, when related to βαπτίζω, does express *the end* of baptism *most usually, if not 'always.*' And he produces to this purpose that text 1 COR. x. 2. which I claim with more propriety than he, as it shews that baptism denotes a personal profession of faith in the person in whose name it is administered. He quotes besides this a great number of other texts in pag. 90, 91: some relating to *the end* of baptism; and some, to shew that the εἰς must properly signifie *in, by, or towards a place.* But to what purpose? Excellent arguing! The præposition εἰς, in some texts of the New Testament, signifies *the end* and design of baptism: and in some other it signifies *in, by, or towards a place*: therefore in MAR. i. 9. it has not its native and proper signification, *into*; though the circumstances of the historical fact plainly prove that it has; and though the parallel passage in MAT. iii. and the similar text, ACTS viii. 38. of Philip and the eunuch *going down both of them into the water*, clearly confirm it.

All Mr. F's. round of quotation is only turning the reader's thoughts from a plain and easy view: nor will it ever shew, that baptizing εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην did in the mind of the evangelist mean any other thing than *baptizing into Jordan*. If he had quoted a thousand texts more; yet still the unanswered questions, in pag. 31, 32. of my *Defence*, would return upon him in their full force. 'If εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην, in Mark, 'does not mean *into Jordan*; what is the meaning of εἰς τὸ Ἰδὲν, in the Acts, when applied to Philip and the eunuch? 'Did they both go down only *by the water*: or did they go 'into the water, as our translators themselves have rendered 'it? Tell me how the historian should, or indeed how he

98 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, V.*

could, in that language, have expressed *a going down into the water*, though ever so desirous of conveying the thought to his readers, if καταβαίνειν εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ will not do it. Will any other phrase in the whole Greek tongue be more clear and full to this purpose, and less liable to evasion? or indeed so clear and full, and so little liable to be mistaken and misapplied? Or will my opponent allow it possible, to express in the Greek tongue the thought of *going down into the water*, in any phrase that shall be liable to no exception or misapplication? Or finally, will he affirm, that the language is incapable, altogether incapable, of expressing that thought?

These questions, I say, remain still unanswered. And the point contained in them seems as if it were given up by Mr. F. though he will not allow the argument for which I bring them to be conclusive. He says, p. 92. that 'allowing they *went down into the water*, and *came up out of the water*; yet the *going down*, or *the coming up out of*, will by no means express or intimate what was *the action of baptizing*; but only represent *the joint action of Philip and the eunuch, before and after baptism.*' Here therefore come in those other questions, in pag. 26, 27 of my *Defence*: of which Mr. F. has thought fit to take as little notice, as of those just now quoted; and for the same good reason: 'Whereas after they were *both gone down into the water*, it is said, that *he baptized him*; I ask, what was here *the action of baptizing*? Was it *sprinkling*? Was it *pouring*? Did they *both go down into the water*, that when they were there, the one might cast a few drops of the water upon the other? The native, primary sense of the word βαπτίζω, and the circumstances of the case, concur together to shew, that the action here was *plunging*. If that word will ever be allowed, in any case, to have signified *plunging*, (and I hope that will not be denied) it must be allowed in this; because this gives a rational account of the design of *going down into the water*.

The paragraph here quoted from my *Defence* is a full answer to Mr. F's. 92d and 93d pages. And a plain answer to these plain questions will decide the matter, whether the country where Philip and the eunuch were was a *land*

of

V. relating to positive Institutions. 99

of hills and valleys, or not. Nor will the arguing that the eunuch was *plunged* give any indication that Philip was *plunged with him*, otherwise than every one knows, that some parts of the baptizer's body must be covered with water, when he puts under water the whole body of the person baptized.

To return from the baptism of the eunuch to that of our Lord Jesus, for which Mr. F. gives occasion in his 93d page: tis enough to our purpose; that Jesus was baptized *in Jordan*. He was baptized where the people were baptized; which we are assured, MAT. iii. 6. was *in Jordan*. Now what was the *action of baptizing*, if it was done *in the river* itself? *Immersion* was the design and end of *going down into the water*: and *going down into the water* with any other end or design, cannot in this case be accounted for. Particularly it is ridiculous to think, that Jesus and John went both down into the water *in Jordan*, that John might there sprinkle a few drops of *the water* upon him.

What therefore can Mr. F. mean, when he says, pag. 93. 'Nor does it appear from the Bible history, that John was authorized to *plunge* [in baptizing] either our Lord or any other person; *but the contrary*; for as much as *the sacramental use of water* among the Jewish priests had ever been by *sprinkling*. I mean that water, called *the water of separation*, which seems to have had a correspondent design with *John's baptism*, supposed to be applied also to *the proselytes of righteousness*. For *John* was of *the race of the priests*, the son of Zacharias: so that it is incumbent on Mr. B. to shew what *authority* John had for *plunging*, or using baptismal water *contrary to the appointed custom* of using the purifying water.

The sacramental use of water, among the Jewish priests, he says, *had ever been by sprinkling*: and adds, that he means *that water, called the water of separation*. Was then the sprinkling of the water of separation upon the priests and Levites, or upon persons under a ceremonial defilement, a *sacrament* among the Jews? At that rate all the rites and ceremonies enjoined to that people were *sacraments*. Or does he pretend to affirm, that *the sprinkling this water of separation*, which he says *seems to have had a*

100 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, V.*

correspondent design with John's baptism, supposed to be applied also to the proselytes of righteousness, was a sacramental use? Will he dare to make a sacrament, of what he himself, in the same sentence, speaks of only as a thing supposed; and for which he cannot bring one Scripture-proof that it was ever commanded? But besides: where is the correspondency of this water of separation, which was used only on special occasions, and always by sprinkling; where, I say, is its correspondency with John's baptism? which he administered upon the proclaimed approach of the kingdom of heaven; and which, under the direction of divine providence, he chose to administer in places where there were large collections of water; particularly in Jordan, MAT. III. 6. and in Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there. Joh. iii. 23. Here is no semblance of a correspondency, either in the design and intention of using the water of separation, or in the way of applying it. Nor further did John baptize in the character of a Jewish priest, notwithstanding that he was of the race of the priests, and son of Zacharias: but he baptized in the character of an extraordinary person, raised up of God in fulfilment of prophecy, and employed and authorised by a special commission from him: God sent him to baptize with water. Joh. i. 33.

But Mr. F's head is so full of his notion of *separation*, in the use of Jewish rites, whether authorized or not; that he will needs bring it in, right or wrong. And he is so well satisfied, that proselyte-baptism among the Jews was performed by *sprinkling on them the water of separation*; that rather than depart from this, he will run all risques, and lose the benefit of deriving John's baptism from the *supposed one* of the proselytes. He will not allow, *that John had any authority for plunging, or using baptismal water contrary to the appointed custom of using the purifying water*, which appointed custom he affirms was *sprinkling*. And on the other side, the *Talmud*, supported by the testimony of *Maimonides* and other Rabbies, will not allow that their proselyte-baptism was performed any other way than by *total immersion*. Which *immersion* they make to be the very *baptism* itself, expressly distinguishing it from the *sprinkling* used on that occasion; which was a *sprinkling of blood*, mentioned by those people as a third thing necessary, besides *circum-*
cision

cision and *baptism*, to make a profelyte. Therefore, according to Mr. Fleming's own account, John's baptism was not derived from that *profelyte-baptism* which the *Talmud* and the Rabbies speak of. And then what will become of his argument? If Mr. F. will not believe the *Talmud* and *Maimonides*, when they affirm that *their profelyte-baptism* was performed by *immersion*; what reason can he give, why I or any man in the world should believe any one thing they say concerning profelyte-baptism?

Before I leave the text in question, MAR. I. 9. which relates the fact of our Saviour's baptism, give me leave to observe: that Mr. Fl. himself does not believe it was designed to hold forth *the end of baptism*: and therefore all his quotations relating to that point, and the reasonings upon them, are no better than casting dust into the reader's eyes, to blind him. After all that he had been saying, in almost a page and a half, about *εις*, when related to βαπτίζω, as expressing most usually, if not always, *the end of baptism*; he himself tells you, pag. 90. that he should rather think, the *εις*, in MAR. I. 9. must properly signify *the place*; as *in, by, or towards Jordan*. He brings a few examples to shew, that this word is sometimes used to signify *by, to, and towards*: and thence he concludes, or rather supposes, that Mark represents John as baptizing Jesus, in some place *by or towards Jordan*.

Hereupon I would ask him, in his own words; *Is this reasoning?* Will these few texts, or a hundred more, prove that the præposition *εις* never has, or that it has not particularly in MAR. I. 9. its native and proper signification of *into*? Even in this same first chapter of Mark, I would ask Mr. F. what is the plain meaning of the præposition, when we are told, ver. 14. that Jesus came *εις την Γαλιλαιαν*; ver. 21. *εις Καπερναουμ*, and *εις την συναγωγην*; ver. 29. *εις την οικίαν Σίμωνος και Ανδρεω*; and ver. 35. *εις ερημόν τοπον*. Is the meaning, that our Lord came only *by or towards Galilee*, and *Capernaum*, and not *into* them? And did he go only *by or towards the synagogue at Capernaum*; when the text expressly says, that *he entred into it, and taught*? Did he go only *by or towards the house of Simon and Andrew*; when the text assures us, *he entred into it, and there healed* Simon's

102 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, V.*

Simon's mother? Did he go only *by* or *towards*, or did he go *into* the solitary place, for the conveniency of private prayer? And in that other chapter where our Lord's baptism is recorded, which is the III^d of Matthew; what did our Lord mean, in the use of this præposition, when he spoke of *casting the fruitless tree into the fire*? Did he mean only throwing it *towards the fire*, or *by the fire side*? And so in ver. 14. Did he mean *gathering the wheat into the garner*, or only *by* or *towards* it? It would be endless to mention all the places, where this word is used in its native and proper sense. And therefore, since the circumstances which attend it in MAR. I. 9. require this sense; I will conclude, that in this sense it ought to be understood there. And though the text in MAT. III. has *απο*, *from*, as Mr. Fl. observes, pag. 93: yet the circumstances clearly shew, that *Jesus when he was baptized went up out of the water*, as our translators have rendred it. The circumstances in this and other cases concur with the texts themselves which speak of baptism, to shew *what was the action of baptizing*.

The criticisms on *απο* and *εκ*, in pag. 94. and 96, are sufficiently answered, by what has been said on the true sense of *εις* in MAR. I. 9. The remainder of pag. 94. is taken up in quotations from authors, with whom in this controversy I have nothing to do. Let them dispute about the difference between *βαπτιω* and *βαπτίζω*, and let Mr. F. commend their judgment as much as he pleases: yet, as I observed in my 2^d Discourse, pag. 27, 28. 'it is the use of the word *βαπτίζω* in the New Testament, [which constantly there signifies to *dip* or *plunge*] that we are to be guided by, even in case there should be, among very numerous instances out of other authors to the same purpose, some wherein it may seem to mean or include other applications of water to the body.' As to Mr. Fl's own Challenge, to which he refers at the bottom of pag. 93: I have read it, but cannot find any argument in it.

The conveniencies for baptizing the jailor and his family, and the other households, and the three thousand mentioned Acts II. I have sufficiently considered already, in my Defence, pag. 55, and 34. I shall therefore trust to the reader's

der's candour, to look there for an answer to Mr. F's 95th page. And as to the point of *decency*, mentioned pag. 96. the character of the persons employed to baptize in the primitive age is enough to satisfy me, that this was consulted, in the use of *the best conveniencies they could come at*. See my *Defence*, pag. 33. at the bottom.

I see no apprehension of *an alarm* in the converted Jews, for *being separated from their infants* at their baptism, and finding them looked upon as *uncapable subjects* of an ordinance which required repentance and belief. There was no foundation for any such *alarm*: because they knew their infants could not repent or believe, and that these things were not required of them. Those of the Jewish nation, who were converted to the christian faith, knew that they were called to the profession of it each for himself; and not their whole body together to covenant for themselves and their children, as was the case of the Jews of old. They saw the case to be intirely different. And therefore the lamentable representations of Mr. Fl. in pag. 95, 96, and the so often answered reference to *the households, supposed to be baptized upon the profession of their heads*, are of no real weight, and serve no other end but to raise the passions.

The 97th page is taken up chiefly with *observations*, and *questions*, and *challenges*, out of other authors. Of all which I shall take little other notice, than to answer in a few words the question, *When and where did the first Antipædobaptists appear?* Which question the author himself most prettily answers for them; and gives us his own word that it is true and undeniable. But I shall not take his word. For the true answer is: that *the people of the same principles and practice first appeared in or about Jerusalem, in the time of our Saviour and his apostles*. And even the *opposers of infant-baptism*, according to this author's own acknowledgment, presently after his question, were as ancient as the old *Montanists*, who made their appearance in the second century. If infant-baptism had begun sooner, it would have been sooner opposed.

Whatever information Mr. *Vindicator* has had from a *worthy gentleman*, concerning the adult-baptizers in Holland,

104 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, V.*

land, of which he tells a round-about story, p. 98. and refers again to his trusty friend; I have nothing to do with the Hollanders practice. The points in question are; whether any thing besides *immersion* is *baptism* in the sense of the New Testament; and whether baptism is, according to the mind of Christ, to be applied to any other than *adult* persons, on their own *profession of faith*. In these points it is manifest Mr. F. and I differ. And yet, as he knows very well, I do not *unchristianize* those from whom I herein differ. Both I, and the people in general upon whom he would fasten this reproach, acknowledge the pædobaptists as brother-christians; but still believe, that they are under a mistake with regard to one of the ordinances of Christ our lawgiver; and that by means of this mistake they have entred his church in an irregular way. We do not deny *that they make any profession of their own faith*; as Mr. F. by his question most unfairly suggests we do. Much less do we affirm, *that the faith and repentance of all pædobaptists are invalid without a rebaptization by plunging*. I wish he may see the great evil of the unjust reflexions here again repeated against his brethren; whom in the same paragraph he afresh contemns, under the name of *the almost imperceptible few*. And as to the charge of *arrogancy*, with which his 98th page concludes; let the candid reader judge, whether it does not fall back upon the unjust accuser.

The assuming airs, mentioned pag. 99. plainly belong to himself: who, in the very sentence wherein he blames those *airs*, dogmatically affirms, *that plunging in baptism has nothing to support it, either from reason or from the Gospel*. Other *airs*, of like kind, I have taken notice of in the preceding parts of his book, which I shall not now recite: only observing, in answer to the charge he brings against *the plunging baptizers*; that he himself knows I acknowledge, that *pædobaptists may differ from us with as much integrity as we differ from them*. And let their understandings be ever so good, which I have not offered to deny: yet if he is a protestant, he must acknowledge, *that we have a right to differ*, and indeed cannot help differing from them, till we ourselves can see reason to agree with them. See my *Defence*, pag. 64.

After

After so many reflexions, and so much bitterness, revived in the latter part of Mr. *Fleming's* book, it is somewhat surprising to observe the manner in which he concludes the whole, (excepting the prayer) in close connexion with the reflexions themselves.

He says *he is aware, that controversies among christians have generally a very bad effect, in making divisions wider, by heightening animosities, and exciting uncharitable dispositions towards one another. He is aware of this. And yet he has acted in this controversy as if his very design was to make divisions wider, and to heighten animosities: and has given clear proofs of that uncharitable disposition in himself, which he is aware is apt to excite the like in others. He is aware, that true morality, the spirit and life of religion, has, by controversies among christians, extremely suffered: but seems not sensible of the immorality and evil tendency of his own false charges and invidious reflexions against his brethren. He says, he has not offered any thing knowingly, that is unworthy the christian character. I am sorry to see him, in these words, coolly and deliberately justifying all that unworthy and unchristian treatment of his brethren, which in the preceding pages I have marked out: all which I must ascribe rather to his forgetting, than not knowing, the character he speaks of. He says, he has an ardent desire, of being found himself holding the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. But if he would make good this high character, he should shew forth a spirit very different from that, which plainly appears in his writings. He humbly hopes, he has given to no one any just reason of offence. I wish I could say the same for him. He is conscious of an affectionate esteem for all good men, who differ from him in the spirit of charity. What then must all the anabaptists be in his account: who are so far from having the happiness of his affectionate esteem, as to fall under his severest censures? And to complete the character, he tells you, that he abhors bigotry in any: and assigns, as the reasons of this his abhorrence, the mischiefs which bigotry produces.*

Now these things are to me the most convincing evidences of *his own bigotry*. He cannot see what stares him in the face. He cannot see, that his *Appendix* itself begins

106 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, V.*

with a scornful invective against a whole body of his christian brethren; charging them with *an unhalloved, uncharitable zeal in every individual*, or however *scarce allowing any exception*. He cannot see, that he has in the same Appendix *injuriously fallen foul on my character*; though in my *Defence* I have clearly proved it. He cannot see the contempt, which throughout this last book he has cast upon *the Anabaptists* in general, as he chooses to call them. He cannot see *any just reason of offence*, in leading his readers to conclude, that the body of them are guilty of *introducing uncharitableness, and are exposed hereupon to a terrible anathema, as sapping and destroying the spirit of the religion of Jesus*. See his Discourse *on plunging in baptism*, p. 34, 35. I wish no worse to him, than *that he may see* more clearly than he does at present, and act from better principles than now seem to guide him. Mean time I cannot forbear observing: that let him protest ever so often, *that he abhors bigotry*, and 'that he is * conscious never to have intended to throw the least contempt *on the body of the anti-pædobaptists, or on any one individual of that body, on account of his differing sentiments*;' yet his protestations, in opposition to glaring proofs under his own hand, will avail nothing. I will believe the expressions, which fall from him in the course of his writing on a favourite subject, to be more true copies of his mind, than those wherein he sets himself down to draw his own picture, to hide his blemishes, and to make himself look as amiable as he can. To me the man, who so plentifully charges *bigotry and uncharitableness* upon others, appears from his own writings to be *exceedingly uncharitable, and a thorough bigot* himself: a bigot, in behalf of a rite or ceremony, at the same time that he labours with all his might to give his readers the meanest opinion of all ritual institutions: and farther, in behalf of a ceremony, which he will not allow derived its authority from the author of the dispensation under which it is to be practised; but from a custom, (not proved, but) *supposed* to have been in use under some former antiquated dispensations.

In this tract I have given the reasons why I differ from him:

* *Vindic. pag. viii.*

him : and desire this favour of those who shall have the patience to go through it ; that they would look back, when they have done, to the contents of the Sections as contained in the *preface* ; whereby they will be the better able to judge of what they have read. The conduct of my antagonist made it needful, not only to enter farther into the controversy than ever I designed ; but likewise to rescue what I had written from perversion ; and to shew, that the people among whom I am ranked are far from deserving the reproaches he casts upon them. He may go on in the same manner if he will : I am weary of the pursuit. And though I will not promise to be hereafter for ever silent : yet I have so much regard to my own peace, and such a desire to do what good I can in some other than the controversial way ; as to resolve, that unless he shall write in time to come more to the purpose than he has hitherto, he shall (for me) have the last word in the controversy.

As to the controversy itself, I desire the reader to remember : that it is about an institution of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he did not think unworthy of his appointing, in the character of **lawgiver* ; and which one of his inspired apostles assures us, was appointed for the most useful and important purposes. That apostle appeals to us, that *as many of us as are baptized into Jesus Christ, are baptized into his death* : and that *therefore* (that is, with this end and view) *are we buried with him by baptism into death ; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* Rom. vi. 3, 4.† Since therefore Christ the lawgiver did not think this ordinance unworthy of his appointing ; and since he appointed it for such important purposes ; it must become such as would honour him, to endeavour to understand clearly what the institution itself was ; then to submit to it ; and to labour in the remaining course of their lives to answer the end of its appointment. In my *Two Discourses*, which Mr. F. has so eagerly opposed, and in their subsequent

* Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. *All power is given unto me in heaven and earth : go ye therefore and baptize.*

† The reader may see a more copious sum of the argument, particularly with regard to the subject of baptism, in pag. 48, 49, 53, 54. of this treatise ; and likewise in pag. 27.

108 *A farther Defence of two Discourses, &c.*

quent Defences, I have endeavoured to shew what really was Christ's institution; to prove that it was designed by him for every voluntary subject of his kingdom, and for them only; and to conciliate that reverence to it, which I think is due to whatever bears the stamp of Christ's authority. If the useful purposes for which it was appointed are not answered in the lives of all who submit to it: that is not the fault of the ordinance itself; tis not because it is of a ritual and not a moral nature; but because men do not regard the evident design, for which it was graciously ordained and wisely calculated. So the whole of the christian religion; and even the faculty of reason itself, whereby we become capable of religion, is by many abused and perverted: and yet no considerate christian will on this account reject christianity; nor any wise man lay aside the use of his reason.

E R R A T A.

PAG. 9. lin. 27. read, so far as appears. pag. 19. lin. 5. read, obligation, pag. 24. lin. 24. r. wife. pag. 25. lin. penult. r. infants:

☞ *Catholicism (See p. 6.) modestly expressed.*
See also p. 40. 41.

L AU59



AB. Dr. Fleming confessed a change of Opinion concerning proselyte Baptism, in a Pamphlet intituled *The Open Address of New Testament Evidence* printed 1771. vide supra p. 85. He says he was convinced of his mistake by Dr. Lardner.

c.
ly
y
or
I
n-
d
at
is
d
y
f-
y
d
is
ne

a-

u

"

t

3

1

2